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The New REPUBLIC

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The 5-year Plan

Will Russia's Experiment Succeed?

by GEORGE SOULE

The World of Robert Frost - *Granville Hicks*

Sophocles, Babbitt and Freud - *Edmund Wilson*

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Mr. Hoover and the Children - - - *Editorial*

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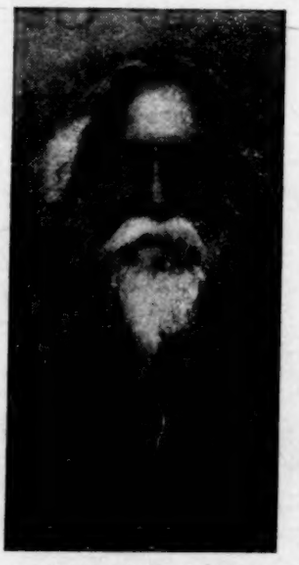

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A Journal of Opinion

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The Week

AS THE Round Table Conference adjourns to work out the details of a proposed future constitution for India, the Indian delegates are closer to each other and to the unrepresented Gandhi followers at home than the British had expected, while the official spokesmen of the Empire are still far from being committed to the aspirations of either. Three important and surprising agreements (at least, surprising to the British) have been registered by the delegates from India: the Native States will federate with the rest of the country; the Mohammedans will work with the Hindus; the caste of untouchables will be granted political equality with the higher Hindu castes. One representative of the untouchables declared, indeed, that they would rather take their chances with government by their fellow countrymen than with a continuation of British rule. Meanwhile Prime Minister MacDonald, speaking for the Cabinet, mentioned neither dominion status nor a time for its establishment, but spoke of a "progressive" constitution. A Conservative leader could hardly have stepped more cautiously. While rifts may appear among the Indians as they try to work out the detailed expression of their agreements on principle, it still is likely that a failure of the Conference, if it comes, will result from British unwillingness to grant even what these "moderate" nationalists want.

SENATOR Norris probably speaks the minds of most of the Republican progressives when he says that what they want is not an extra session of Congress but a chance to pass, as quickly as possible, legislation other than that likely to be recommended by the President. If Mr. Hoover and his leadership in Congress will permit progressive measures to be made law in the session which is now convening, there will be no holding up of appropriation bills or other routine administration measures by the progressives. This is an intelligent statement which puts the whole controversy about a special session in the true light. To read many of the Eastern and regular Republican papers, one would have thought that the only desire of the progressives is to cause delay, make speeches and harass the President. As a matter of fact, they are committed to a program consisting of bills for governmental operation of Muscle Shoals, machinery for unemployment relief, regulation of the injunction, etc., which there is a strong likelihood of getting through Congress if Congress is only allowed to vote on them, and machine dictation is removed. If Republican leaders like Representative Snell and Senator Watson live up to their promises to allow this legislation to be considered, the credit is due to the progressives who refused to be stampeded into coöperation with the administration, and thus took over the leadership of the opposition relinquished by the seven prominent Democrats.

THE preparatory disarmament session of the League of Nations goes the way of its predecessors into futility. The chief controversy in which the United States was involved concerned the proposal of some of the European delegates to reduce armaments by limited expenditure of money rather than by direct limits on the numbers of men and materials. Our delegate, Hugh Gibson, argued that this would be unfair to us, because the purchasing power of a dollar in terms of armament is not so great

in the United States as that of its gold equivalent in the currencies of other nations. This contention is probably untrue as regards many materials, but it is true as regards wages and salaries. Nevertheless, a compromise might have been achieved by applying statistical computations of relative purchasing power, thus equalizing real expenditures. Such considerations became secondary, however, when France, Japan and Turkey, supported by Czechoslovakia and other minor powers, declined to reveal the amount of armament they now possess. One cannot escape the conviction that there are enough powers who really do not want to disarm to block the whole effort, by one subterfuge or another. The war settlement made by the Treaty of Versailles is fundamentally unstable, and can be supported intact only by the armed force of the victors. The French are realistic enough to understand this fact. As long as they are unwilling to see the treaty revised, the world will remain an armed camp.

A SIGNIFICANT incident is the publication of a hastily prepared appeal to President Hoover, signed by a distinguished list of citizens, that he should stand by the World Court and do what he can to get the United States to join. President Hoover has for years been known as an advocate of the World Court. He has repeatedly made public recommendation that we should become a member; he is still President, and at least during the forthcoming session of Congress, his party will have a majority in both Houses. Under normal circumstances, an appeal to a President with these conditions existing would seem both superfluous and presumptuous. If it is neither in the case of Mr. Hoover, it is the enfeebled character of his recent support of the World Court which is to blame.

UNCONFIRMED reports that London is to borrow a large sum from Paris, or that a reciprocal credit of $1,000,000,000 is being arranged, which will be drawn upon by the British but not by the French, rest upon the peril in the maldistribution of the world's supply of monetary gold. The Bank of France has been accumulating gold rapidly and has much more than it needs, while the Bank of England has been losing gold and is in danger of not having enough to support its currency and credit. French short-term credits outstanding in England would permit France to draw the British gold supply far below the danger point. The proposed credit arrangement would create a defense against any such eventuality. There is no evidence that France desires to embarrass Great Britain or needs to do so for her own sake, but an uncontrolled drift might conceivably have that result. It goes without saying that as long as England is thus dependent on French good will, her statesmen will not be likely to take any action which might arouse French resentment. Two more permanent remedies for this unstable situation are possible. One is a concerted effort of the central banks to mobilize in some way the gold reserves of the world—perhaps through the Bank for International Settlements. The other is a readjustment of national price levels which might occur as a natural result of the existing depression, and which would start a flow of gold away from Paris and New York into the banking reserves of other nations.

BY A decision of the United States Supreme Court, the independent moving-picture theaters have won a victory over the big distributors, whose practices were adjudged a violation of the Sherman Act. Readers of The New Republic may remember an article by Sherman R. Wellesby which told the story of the revolt of the exhibitors, and indicated the public interest at stake. By means of a uniform contract, enforced arbitration of disputes and onerous credit arrangements in the case of theaters which changed hands, the combination compelled exhibitors to purchase far in advance the rights to films which they had not seen, and virtually destroyed competition in other ways. The result was that the public took what Hollywood saw fit to provide—and had to like it—while the small exhibitor was an economic vassal of the producing and distributing interests. The New Republic is no doctrinaire exponent of the virtues of competition, and recognizes that combination is the economic tendency of the age. Nevertheless, a combination of movie magnates to control entertainment—and faintly possible art—in the interest of their own profits, is not likely to add greatly to the joy or the culture of the nation.

NEWS of India of as great significance as anything happening at London has just reached this country, though we have not seen it in the daily press. The important state of Mysore has just given its official approval to the dissemination of birth-control information. Four of the leading hospitals of the state will employ women physicians to give such information to married women who "have bona-fide reasons for acquiring it." Moreover, in view of the poverty of the average Indian family, contraceptive apparatus will be on sale in each of these hospitals at cost. This new policy has been instigated by Dr. Subha Rao, senior surgeon of Mysore, and principal of the Medical College of Bangalore. It remains to be seen, of course, whether and to what extent the inhabitants of Mysore will take advantage of the opportunity afforded them. The conservatism of the Indian woman is notorious; but the government would hardly establish these clinics if it had no reason to believe they would be used. If the movement should spread, its importance would be incalculable. India is cursed with overpopulation as is China; nowhere in the world is artificial restriction of the birth rate more urgently needed. Incidentally, a commission of American experts is now in China trying to find out just what difficulties, religious, economic or social,

stand in the way of the introduction of birth control there. Compared to such developments as these, the recognition by the Archbishop of Canterbury that voluntary parenthood is now universal in the Western world fades into triviality.

MR. Paul Block is an advertising man who buys newspapers on a strictly business basis. Like other elderly and successful business men, he would like to be recognized outside his own papers, and he has therefore established a foundation at Yale for the study of journalism. The first activity of this foundation, so far as we can learn, was to present a speech by Colonel Robert R. McCormick. Of Colonel McCormick it is sufficient to say that he is the publisher of Liberty, the magazine which prefaces each article with the number of minutes needed to read it; of The New York Daily News, which started the whole business of the tabloids and is today the most successful of the half-size sheets; of The Chicago Tribune, which is the chief spokesman of black reaction in the Middle West and carries farther than any other American paper the policy of publishing news articles written to fit its own editorial views. We feel that President Angell owes the country an explanation for permitting Colonel McCormick to appear under the auspices of Yale as an exponent of serious journalism.

From Breadline to Millionaire

THE progress of the Five Year Plan is causing the American newspapers to react wildly: in fact, an atmosphere of panic seems to prevail. The Red Army is rumored to have mutinied; Stalin is rumored to have been assassinated; Litvinov is rumored to be leaving the Disarmament Commission in disgust and an attempt to have been made to assassinate him; Hamilton Fish gives out interviews demanding an embargo on Russian imports and is heard of as mysteriously frisking lettuces in a Baltimore refrigeration plant in the hope, apparently, of finding Communist bombs; Matthew Woll says that "there is in that regime [the Soviet Union] something which makes it impossible for our nation to hold with that regime the relations common to friendly government"; the American State Department denies that it has heard a word about the offer to negotiate the Russian debt alleged by Stalin to have been made by Litvinov; the Treasury Department issues regulations designed to bar Russian imports on the pretext that they are the products of convict labor—and the Five Year Plan is reported to be going unexpectedly well.

The progress to date of the Five Year Plan provides a difficult problem for the newspapers. Both The New York Evening Post and The New York Times are at present running series of articles about it by men who have recently been in Russia. There are to be twenty-four articles in The Post and every afternoon their headlines dominate the front page: the general title of the series seems to be "The Red Menace," and certain of the daily headlines are evidently intended to convey the impression that the Russians are exceedingly formidable—for example: "Tractor Plant in Urals Easily Convertible into Red Gun Factory in War." Certain others, on the other hand, suggest a picture of catastrophic and tragic failure: "Famished Moscow Short All Food Except Bread; Buyers in Line for Hours"; "Red Railroads Collapse Under Five Year Plan Load; Wrecks Kill 1,000 a Year." When we come to read the articles, however, we discover that Mr. H. R. Knickerbocker, who wrote them, is neither unsympathetic with the Russians nor pessimistic about their success: finding American engineers in charge of the gigantic tractor factories, power and steel plants and asbestos mines of the Five Year Plan and apparently confident and enthusiastic about their work in a country where the expert has a free hand as he rarely has in America, he seems moved principally to admiration.

And as for The New York Times, though Mr. Edwin L. James is a little more grudging than Mr. Knickerbocker, he is forced to admit that the Russians are doing pretty well: "It is perfectly true that it is a far day to when Russia will be able to compete with the United States industrially. But agriculturally she is showing that she can. And it does not solve the problem to predict the collapse of the Kremlin regime next year." This, however, is precisely what in effect The Times editorially does do. It was the stern duty of The New Republic some years ago to take The Times to task for its suppressions and distortions of the news from the Soviets, and though The Times angrily denied these charges, its Russian reports thereafter so conspicuously improved that it now possesses in Mr. Walter Duranty unquestionably the best correspondent in the field. Mr. Duranty is obviously impressed by the Soviets, and his reports on the Five Year Plan are rarely gloomy. Yet in spite of the reports of its own correspondent, and in spite of the statements of Mr. James, The Times in its editorial columns last Sunday announced that the Five Year Plan was breaking down: "That all is not well with the Five Year Plan has been written plain on the face of the recent news from Russia. . . . The conscience of the world has been shocked by the execution of scores of men who were unquestionably made scapegoats for the shortcomings of the great Plan. . . . It is difficult to visualize industrial production establishing records under the shadow of the death penalty." This appears to be The Times's only reason for its belief that the Plan is bound to fail. Well, in America we execute people for murder and for holding unorthodox political opinions; in Russia they execute people for abusing positions of high responsibility. Are the official rifle squads of the Cheka any more depressing to the morale of the workers than the hired Cossacks of the American mill towns? Are they any worse than the New York police? As

a matter of fact, the engineers that Mr. Knickerbocker encountered in the Russian industrial centers seemed to have been as little worried by the shadow of the death penalty as the young men and girls whom the authors of The London Economist's report, discussed elsewhere in this issue, found upon the great collectivist farms and upon whose faith and enthusiasm he believes that the Communist government may count to carry the country through its hardships and privations.

What is most amusing, however, and most symptomatic of the current state of mind, is the editorial preceding this one, in which The Times, before scornfully minimizing the progress of Russian Communism, tries to reassure its readers in regard to the decline of American capitalism. This editorial is called "Land of Multimillions," and as the theme of the opportunities in America for a poor young man to become a multimillionaire has come to seem a little naïve and old-fashioned, the editorial begins and ends on rather a light and casual note: "If you are a poor young man in America and want to be rich, *sursum corda!* Let not temporary unemployment or business depression disturb you, or be discouraged by the oft-realized prophecy of captains of industry during the past year that 'next week' would see the end of bad times." The editorial writer in The Times is not so superficial as to suppose that the depression is going to end next week. But, he goes on to say, "Such publications as that of the completed accounting of the estate left by Thomas Fortune Ryan, published in last Friday's Times, are eloquent with the information that poor young men are still rolling up vast accretions of wealth. Mr. Ryan began with virtually nothing; he was a Virginian, but not an F. F. V. His estate is finally appraised at $121,028,992, and increased $4,522,915 after his death.

"There are other satisfactions in life. But if the amassing of a great fortune, with the power it bestows, is the prevailing ambition of a youth, the record shows that there is as yet no closed season for millions-hunting, Mr. Ryan lived through several panics, when there were as many pessimists about the future of the country as there are now. Jay Gould's estate, appraised two years after the panic of 1893, was $81,000,000. He too was the architect of his own fortunes. The accountings of the wealth of other self-made Americans were: in 1907, W. C. Whitney, $24,900,076; in 1908, Russell Sage, $64,153,800; in 1909, E. H. Harriman, about $58,000,000 after shrinkage; and, in the same year, Marshall Field, $84,459,032. Men now alive and in good health will leave estates that will make these seem insignificant, exceeding even the vast aggregate of Mr. Ryan. The other day a manufacturer of canned soup died and left $100,000,000.

"There never was a riper time, say wise men downtown, for a combination of brains, industry, character and judgment to receive richer monetary rewards."

One does not know how many of the men in the breadlines will take courage from this assurance of The Times. But if they do not, it won't be the fault of The Times, which is doing its best to keep up their morale in spite of its own evidently growing suspicions that capitalism doesn't work so well as it supposed and that Communism works much better.

Mr. Hoover and the Children

THE Hoover Child Health Conference on the whole probably did more good than harm. While it is difficult to strike a balance sheet, it is always advantageous to have a group of experts on all phases of child welfare come together and talk things over, even if they do so chiefly in the lobbies before and after the formal sessions. The nineteen points in the child-health program, which Dr. Wilbur read over the radio after the Conference had ended, consisted for the most part of dreadful platitudes, things which anyone with any common sense would assume to be true; yet there is no doubt that it was a good thing to have even these portentous truisms heard by radio listeners and read next morning in the newspapers.

There are, however, some things to go into the other side of the ledger. There was an ugly odor of politics around the whole Conference; it certainly did not relieve the apprehension which we expressed in The New Republic a few weeks ago, that Mr. Hoover, by endorsing incompetent or tendentious research, may unjustly discredit the work and attitude of the expert. This Conference, despite the supposed long period of preparation, gave evidence of much hasty, last-minute work of a sort which certainly will not enhance the reputation of those who participated in it. Whether the fault was that of the chairman, a man whose name is surprisingly little known among those who devote their lives to child welfare, or of someone else, the physical arrangements for the Conference were inadequate throughout. Finally, and the most serious charge of all, it is incomprehensible that a supposedly scientific conference devoted to child welfare should have been made the occasion for a determined propaganda in favor of the transfer, from the Children's Bureau to the Public Health Service, of the health work now efficiently administered under the direction of Miss Grace Abbott in the Department of Labor. The daily press has erroneously suggested that the intrusion of this question into the Conference was the fault of zealous partisans of Miss Abbott. It was not; the initiative came from those who want the transfer made, and the effort was obviously well planned and efficient. The chief responsibility for permitting this intrusion of politics at the expense of science must lie with Dr. R. L. Wilbur, Secretary of the Interior, who shares the view of the old-fashioned medical men that their own group should

get as much control as possible in as many fields as possible. The hostility to the Children's Bureau went so far that the volume prepared in advance for the delegates, containing digests of the reports of various committees, included an attack on Miss Abbott, while her own minority report defending the position of the Bureau was omitted. As our readers do not need to be told, The New Republic sees no advantage in putting an end to what is admitted to be a fine piece of work in order to transfer it to the hands of another group which has never particularly distinguished itself in any field, and certainly not in the sort of socialized activity which the Children's Bureau carries on. Totally unwarranted was the effort of some of Doctor Wilbur's colleagues to suggest that this dispute was a sex war, with the women standing by Miss Abbott. Plenty of the most distinguished male delegates at the Conference were found in the ranks of those who believe that a well done job is so rare in Washington that when one is discovered, it should be let alone.

Mr. Hoover, who was elected on a platform of prosperity and perhaps may be defeated in 1932 on the same platform, must have been disconcerted at the amount of emphasis laid by speakers on economic disabilities which militate against happy and successful childhood. Miss Abbott herself, with a practical vision unique in government officials, has always viewed the child-welfare problem as a unified one, with economics at its core. She pointed out at the Conference that "hundreds of thousands of American parents are unable to provide for their own children without assistance"; that, as the 1926 Federal Trade Commission figures show, "87 percent of the 24,000,000 families in the United States own only 10 percent of the wealth," and that therefore "using as a measuring rod the estimate of $1,600 to $1,800 as the amount necessary to provide a minimum of health and decency for a family of five, we find that a large part of the population of the United States does not live in health and decency." There is, indeed, something a little ironic in a Child Health Conference conducted under the personal inspiration of a President who stood by while Congress killed the Sheppard-Towner law, despite the fact that while the law was in effect the infant mortality was reduced by hundreds of thousands of deaths annually; a President, moreover, who has not spoken vigorously and effectively against the continuing evil of child labor, and who must share the responsibility for the shocking fact that the final recommendations of the Conference were so timorous on this point that they might as well have omitted it entirely.

No real summary of the scientific achievement of the Conference is yet possible; there were more than 175 committees and sub-committees, who submitted 141 reports, and of most of these only summaries are yet available. It was perhaps natural that the final document produced by the Executive Committee should be little more than a list of idealistic and platitudinous recommendations for the rights of the American child. All the embarrassing controversial questions were postponed to be considered by a continuation committee which will be appointed later by President Hoover.

At the closing sessions of the Conference, Secretary Wilbur made the one important practical suggestion: the establishment of local child-welfare conferences throughout the country to carry on the work. That such local activity is desirable no one will gainsay; but it should be equally obvious that the existence of such local organizations must not, in the future, be used as an excuse for the failure of the federal government to do its own part of the task. Moreover, the time has come to ask the still more fundamental question: Is the laisez-faire philosophy which animates Mr. Hoover and his chief associates in the government such as to make possible the safeguarding of childhood in the America of the present and future? The New Republic is not aware of any evidence that it is.

Can Copper Be Controlled?

ONE OF the striking features of the depression is the existence of large surplus stocks of commodities like coffee, sugar, rubber, wheat and copper, which have driven prices lower and lower, and seemingly cannot be disposed of at a profit. It is commonly said that in many cases these surpluses are due to artificial attempts to control prices. Cartels or other forms of monopoly held large quantities off the market. But the resulting high prices stimulated production and restricted use, while the surpluses grew to unmanageable size. Can this sort of thing succeed any better in the future? One important step to restore and maintain prices was taken as a result of the recent conference held in New York by leading American, European and African producers, in which an agreement was reached to restrict the current output of copper.

Heretofore, the chief copper-producing regions of the world have been North and South America, certain parts of Europe, Japan and Australasia. Further copper reserves are known to exist in Siberia and Brazil, but these are still largely undeveloped. In the last few years, Africa has come into the picture with the great new fields now being opened up in the Belgian Congo and northern Rhodesia. It was the steady stream of copper coming from the rich Katanga mines of the Belgian Congo, together with increasing amounts from those of Canada and Europe, that have contributed to the recent demoralization of the copper market.

The most significant fact about the recent conference was its inclusion for the first time of African copper interests, which have hitherto remained independent of Copper Exporters, Inc., the powerful organization of American and European producers who control between 90 and 95 percent of the total output.

The increasing amounts of copper which have been mined in the last few years have led to a rapid accumulation of reserve stocks, now said to be the largest on hand since 1921. This accumulation of stocks was further enhanced by the prevailing business depression, and the abnormally high price of eighteen cents a pound which was artificially maintained by American copper producers. Consumers refused to buy copper at this high price in sufficient quantities to keep pace with the increasing supply, and began to cast about for suitable substitutes in the shape of aluminum, stainless steel and other metal alloys. The first sign of weakness in the copper market came this spring, when a cut of four cents a pound was agreed upon. The price thenceforth slid downhill from fourteen cents to nine and one-half cents a pound in October, the lowest level reached in over thirty years.

The new "gentlemen's agreement" on the part of the leading copper producers of the world has been described as unquestionably the most important and influential business development in a long period. It led to an immediate rise in the price of copper to twelve cents a pound. Whether such stabilization of the copper industry can be achieved, in the face of similar attempts and repeated failures in the cases of coffee, rubber, tin, nitrate and other commodities, remains to be seen.

The failure to stabilize the production and selling price of rubber under the British Stephenson Plan is a matter of recent history. The case of coffee is even more contemporary. Only a few months ago, the late Brazilian government was forced to appeal for a stabilization loan of $100,000,000 to save its coffee valorization plan from utter ruin, due to the accumulation of vast reserve stocks which could not be disposed of profitably in view of the break in price on the world market. The subsequent overthrow of the Washington Luiz administration as a result of the issues arising out of the coffee situation points a fitting moral to this attempt at enforcing regulation of the coffee industry from above.

The case of copper is no exception to the general economic laws that govern supply and demand. It may be argued that copper occupies a special position, in that production areas are necessarily limited to certain regions where ore deposits exist, and that supplies are not inexhaustible. Since the organization of Copper Exporters, Inc., in 1926, practically a world monopoly of copper production has existed in which American interests, controlling three-quarters of the entire world output, exercised a dominating influence. For the last thirty-five years, over one-half the total supply of copper annually has come from the American-owned mines of North and South America, which yielded more than the combined output of all other countries.

But American supremacy in the copper-mining industry has been challenged by European interests since the discovery and development of enormous new ore bodies in South Central Africa. The mines of the Belgian Congo, together with the new fields now being opened up in northern Rhodesia, are sensationally rich in high-grade ore deposits of vast extent. Already, the Katanga mines in the Belgian Congo, controlled by Belgian and British interests, have claimed a leading place in the world's "Big Four" in copper production, with over 300,000,000 pounds to their credit in 1929.

Last year revealed the copper potentialities of northern Rhodesia, where recent discoveries have disclosed the existence of one of the world's richest copper fields. Twenty-one billion pounds of proven ore reserves are known to exist there, with a possible forty billion pounds estimated. Ownership of these properties is concentrated in the hands of the so called British "Big Six," since enlarged into the "Big Nine." While American copper interests are to some extent involved in these properties, a sharp battle was fought and won to retain British control.

The mines of northern Rhodesia will not become a vital factor in world copper production until 1935. By 1940, it is predicted that they will be able to throw over a billion pounds of copper on the world market, with another half-billion pounds coming from the Katanga mines of the Belgian Congo and a similar quantity from the Frood mines of Canada, owned by the International Nickel Company, a combination of British, Canadian and American interests.

Meanwhile, it is asserted that the copper mines of the United States have reached their highest peak of productivity, and that the next ten years will see them start on the downward grade. This means that the center of gravity of copper production may shift to other regions, and the ultimate control of copper to other than American hands. The future of copper, whose fate has been entrusted to the keeping of an international cartel, remains, therefore, inextricably involved with the destinies of those nations who are now engaged in a lively struggle to win for themselves first place in the ranks of modern industrial civilization. Will the cartel ever survive this international competition?

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Will the Five Year Plan Succeed?

Russia's Great Experiment After Two Years

THE MOST exciting thing which I have seen in print for several years is a forty-thousand-word report, published on the first of November by The Economist of London. This sober journal, the leading financial weekly of what is still the leading capitalist center of the world, sent an expert to Communist Russia to assess the progress of the famous Five Year Plan. This is not the first time the Plan has been described, either by Russians or by foreign observers. But we have not had from any other source so complete a record, by one both technically competent and objective in his attitude, concerning the state of the Russian economy at the end of the first two years of the program.

I say the observer is impartial. This may seem incredible to those who would expect hostility from an organ at the very heart of capitalist activity, devoted to traditional economics of the laissez-faire variety in its editorial pages. Yet, if bias may be detected in the report, one suspects that it is on the side of the Russians rather than against them; here and there the author betrays something very like enthusiasm for the main effort that is going on, and a hope that it will succeed. This attitude may be natural in one who is not primarily concerned with proletarian politics, dictatorship, schisms, plots, counterplots and spying, or the destitution of the people, but with the endeavor to build a new industrial system.

No Unemployment or Overproduction

Against the background of what is now happening elsewhere in the world, it is striking, for instance, to find that in Russia unemployment has been virtually eliminated. The number of registered unemployed, which reached a maximum of about one million seven hundred and forty thousand on April, 1929, has since fallen to about three hundred thousand; these persons have now been offered the opportunity to enroll for industrial training; registration has been abandoned and unemployment benefits are no longer being paid. Registration of the unemployed is probably no more complete in Russia than in other countries which have practised it, but the trend at least is remarkable. Still more so is the fact that most of the unemployed have consisted of peasants settling in town, and women, boys and girls who have never had a job—classes which were not even recorded in the recent unemployment census in this country. There has been all along, and still is, in Russia, a terrific shortage of skilled labor.

Another remarkable aspect of the Russian economy, in a world with glutted markets, is that the Russians have no selling problem. The trouble is not persistent overproduction, but underproduction. "One hundred and fifty million people are, as it were, standing in a queue and waiting to be served." New standards of living of the peasants, new needs for agricultural equipment, the wants of the city workers, increase the demand more rapidly than production can follow, or will be able to do for years to come. The distributive machinery is organized; the State controls both prices and incomes; there is nothing blocking the consumption of as many goods as can be produced and transported. All the nation's energy is concentrated on turning them out.

The Essence of the Plan

But these are, in a sense, mere external aspects of the new type of industrial revolution which Russia is attempting. At the center is the Plan itself. There are a number of ways in which this Plan captures one's interest. In the first place, it is a test, on a grand scale, of economic theory. Critics of capitalism have always been answered by the argument that, in spite of all its faults, capitalism works, whereas human capacity would break down before the task of carrying on an industrial civilization by a master plan, and without the profit motive. In Russia that is just what is being attempted. In the second place, all theories aside, there is something arresting in the spectacle of one of the greatest nations of the world trying to create, as it were overnight and by fiat, a full-fledged industrial civilization of the latest model. And in the third place, there is the contagion of the very effort itself, in which the spirit of a people is mustered as if for war, and at the cost of great temporary sacrifice, to conquer poverty, ignorance and confusion.

After undergoing the devastation of war, revolution and civil war, Russia had by 1927 nearly regained her modest pre-war level of economic development. Then it was that the "New Economic Policy," which had been a reversion toward capitalism, and had convinced many observers that Russia would before long conduct her affairs much like the rest of us, was abandoned, and the Five Year Plan adopted. The original schedule calls for doubling the national income between 1928 and 1933. During this time, it is calculated, the population will have increased 11.8 percent, and the number of wage earners, 18.2 percent. The production of the heavy or basic industries like iron and steel is supposed to be enlarged two and a half times, while

the production of the light industries making consumers' goods is to increase by 44 percent, and agricultural output by 50 percent. While this is the general outline of the goal, the Plan is not a rigid program, but is supposed to represent the maximum speed of development possible—something to be attained not by gradualness or evolution, but by a supreme concentration of will power. The "tempo"—a word much used in Russia and full of Bolshevist associations there—has been increased several times and now calls for the completion of the Plan in four years rather than five. Anyone accustomed to the pace of growth in production under capitalism must be left breathless by these figures.

The Most Thrifty Nation in History

Of course, Russia had to build from the ground up. And the cost of erecting all these factories, drilling all these oil wells, sinking all these mines, lining out all these railroads, building these dams and power houses, is tremendous. At the beginning it was estimated at 76,000,000,000 rubles, nominally $38,000,000,000. The final cost is likely to be nearer 100,000,000,000 rubles. It is said to represent fully half the national income for five years. As rich a nation as the United States does not devote to new capital purposes anything like so heavy a proportion of its income. Probably no nation spent as much of its substance to fight the War.

How is this money raised? Under a capitalist economy, an undeveloped country would borrow abroad, and go much slower. But Russia, however much she might want to borrow, is forced to raise most of her funds at home. This year the budget gathered 47.3 percent of its revenues from taxation, 19.4 percent from loans domestic and foreign, and the remainder from the profits of State property and enterprises. The tax revenues are about equally divided between direct and indirect levies—the first consisting of taxes on agriculture, on the turnover of industry and on income, and the second of excise and customs. In Russia it is even clearer than in capitalist countries that the gathering and spending of money is merely a way of directing the use of labor and materials. When money is taken by the State and employed to build new productive equipment, the population is deprived of immediate satisfactions to an equivalent extent. Management, labor energy and the natural resources of the country are directed to making factories, mills and machinery instead of to turning out articles and services of common use. Russia is the premier example of "thrift" in all the world's history.

If, in addition to the budget of the central government, we consider the full Finance Plan, which embraces local governments, revenues from social-insurance and credit systems, all expenditures of industry and such bodies as the coöperative and trade-union movements, the total amount of revenues subject to control is estimated at 19,000,000,000 rubles for the fiscal year 1929-30. Industrial and agricultural reconstruction absorbs 63 percent of this amount, 21 percent is taken for the "cultural revolution," which includes education and health services, 10 percent is spent for administration and defense, and 6 percent for miscellaneous purposes. As the report drily says, "accumulation and redistribution of wealth on such a scale are quite unprecedented."

Increase of Production

At the end of the first year of the Plan, the fixed capital of industry had been increased over 18 percent; ninety-one new factories had started production, and their output was valued at 168,000,000 rubles. The general increase in production was officially stated to be 23.4 percent, or 2 percent more than was specified in the Plan. Progress, however, was uneven. Some industries, like oil, agricultural machinery, electrical goods, rubber and non-ferrous metals, turned out more than the Plan called for, but the building and chemical trades, sugar and fertilizers fell behind. Moreover, there was a deterioration in quality of output, which was the result partly of inferior materials, and partly of lack of sufficient skill in the workers. Production costs were excessively high.

Encouraged by the partial success attained, the government revised the program for the second year by raising the percentage of increase in output from 21 to 31. But during the year serious difficulties were encountered. The workers were feeling the hardships of the Plan, not only in consequence of the iron rations which it would have enforced upon them in any case, but because the renewal of the "class war" against the richer peasants had led to a severe shortage of meat and fats and such raw materials as cotton and flax. The introduction of the five-day week, with uninterrupted operation and two or three shifts a day, did not aid production as much as had been hoped. It caused some confusion, and necessitated the employment of more untrained and unskilled labor than would otherwise have been the case. Workers became restless, too, and traveled about the country in groups of thousands, partly because of an invigorated spirit which made them want to see the country, partly to seek better food, housing and working conditions. Much of this is strangely reminiscent of the confusion of our war efforts. Instead of a production increase of 31 percent, 24 percent was achieved—or about the same as the first year. It is about this "failure"—resulting in an increase of production amounting to about 50 percent in two years—that controversy has been raging in Russia. Some faint hearts began to doubt that the Five Year Plan could be achieved in four years. The author of the report doubts it, too. Indeed, he suggests that this speeding up of tempo is largely a political and psychological device to nerve the nation for a more earnest struggle and to make the

workers think that, since the task is now half done, their hardships will the sooner be over.

"Socialist Emulation"

The retardation of the rate of increase has been most notable in building, transport and coal mining. The managers blame shortage of raw material, of capital equipment and fuel. The Central Committee of the Communist party blames bureaucratic minds and methods of the managers, and, most of all, their inability to mobilize the creative ability of the workers. In consequence, a great drive for "Socialist emulation" has been begun. The fever and excitement of the pace is believed unhealthy and abnormal by the author, though he does think the dreamy Russian worker is being waked up to an appreciable extent. Groups of workers enter into competition with each other for greater output, at less cost and with less waste. These competitions—a Communist substitute for capitalist competition—are publicly held and rewarded, and are "assuming the character of a football match in England." Progress is recorded every day on boards in the shops, in the press and on posters. For instance, The Isvestia of October 1 records that the factory A M O in Moscow, for producing 3 percent above the yearly quota, is awarded 750,000 rubels for new houses for the workers. The Karl Marx factory in Leningrad, for completing its annual program in eleven months, is given 750,000 rubles towards a dining room and meeting room. Four crack workers and two crack engineers of the Ilytch metallurgical works in Kharhov are awarded traveling scholarships abroad. And so on. "Planning from below" is now the order of the day; young workers participate in drawing up plans, and promise incredibly good performance, challenging those in other factories to race them. They are scouring the plants to devise better methods. Every exertion is employed to stop the turnover of labor.

Summing up progress under the Plan so far, the author states that it is genuine, though it "can in no way be said to justify the fantastic estimates of expansion which are seemingly based upon it." The production of iron, steel and other metals has grown, in individual cases, between 15 and 40 percent. The output of coal, which before the War was twenty-three million tons, has now exactly doubled, but coal will not achieve the Five Year Plan in three years, in accordance with the official schedule for it, unless frenzied efforts to improve the situation in the Donetz Basin, "the danger spot of the front," are effective. The immense building program, though it has gone far, is likewise behind the new schedule of three years and a half. There is an acute shortage of building materials—the production of which has increased only 30 percent. So fast is the pace that almost half the buildings under construction do not have finally approved working plans and drawings, but are erected from sketch drawings. Oil, electrification and agricultural-machinery manufacture are actually ahead of the revised and speeded-up schedule.

The "light" industries, making consumers' goods, were not supposed to grow so rapidly, attention being concentrated on the basic means of production. They have fallen behind even what was expected of them for the most part. Actually fewer cotton goods were produced this year than last; woolen and linen have gone ahead somewhat; the output of boots and shoes has increased greatly, though the quality has deteriorated.

The principal threat to the execution of the industrial program is evidently the lack of enough skilled labor and technicians. Half a million new trained workers will be needed for factories opening next year—an increase of a third over the present supply. Factory training shops are filled to capacity and can accommodate only 30,000. Engineering courses have been reduced to the barest technical essentials. Can dilution of labor accomplish the result? "The number, quality and devotion of these *cadres,* as the industrial army is called in Russia, will in the end decide the fate of the Industrial Revolution."

This English observer was struck by the fact that in Russia nobody is worrying about the rapid increase of population. Communists believe that the danger of overpopulation is a capitalist bogey, that, under Socialism, jobs and sustenance can be found for any number. Given Russia's tremendous area and natural resources, they may be justified in the event for many years.

Agriculture Revolutionized

The agricultural situation has, of course, been critical. Even in 1929 the production of grain was about 10 percent below the pre-war level. Before the War, Russia had sold abroad between 12 and 15 percent of her grain—although according to the figures of per-capita production, she would have been a grain-importing nation. What happened was that the large landlords and richer peasants sent enough to market to supply the cities and to sell to the exporters, while the poorer peasants were undernourished. The redistribution of land not only checked the output as small holdings were substituted for large, but it practically stopped production for the market. Government requisitioning could not obtain much grain, for the simple reason that a real surplus over the peasants' needs did not exist. What grain was finally brought to market was in great part grown by the new class of prosperous peasants who rented land and employed hired labor. The government either had to encourage this class and so reëstablish capitalism on the land, or organize production in a different way.

This problem was attacked with a double-barreled policy. In order to provide a stop-gap source of grain so that interference with the richer

peasants could be ventured, great State farms were created on new land. And large-scale collective farms, in which the peasants were to pool their land and possessions, and work under new methods, were organized.

The State farms, though at first thought of merely as an expedient, have been so successful that they have become a major part of the agricultural policy. They are in semi-arid regions with a fertile but hard soil, which had remained unpopulated because the land could not be broken deeply enough with horse-drawn plows to defeat the drought. But such land is farmed most profitably in this country with large-scale methods. There are few people needed to an acre, and they are not dependent on the local yield. The heaviest machinery can be used without miring. Though crop failures may be expected occasionally, they will not be frequent enough to cause disaster, and will not occur in every locality. The area of most State farms varies from 30,000 to 60,000 hectares; "Gigant," the largest, has 220,000. (Its director, technical staff and workers are all under thirty years of age.) It is estimated that the State farms will next year yield twice as much grain as the richer peasants produced in 1927. The plan of State management is now being applied to increasing the output of meat, milk, vegetables, cotton, flax and other agricultural necessities. These are far more complex problems the solution of which cannot be achieved inside of several years at the earliest.

Collectives Advance and Retreat

The story of the advance and retreat on the collective-farm front is well known in this country. At first it went well, even the "middle-class peasants" coming in. Then the attempt to enforce the plan wholesale created resistence, with the resulting destruction of animals and crops and the food shortage. This so alarmed the central authorities that peasants who had been compelled to join collectives were allowed to leave with their goods, members of the collectives were given special privileges in remission of taxes or fines, and a modified capitalism was introduced by allowing 5 percent of the gross revenue to be distributed to the members in proportion to their contributions of capital. The movement, after its deflation, was thus stimulated and now includes a quarter of the peasants of the nation—almost half the population in the grain-growing regions. Great technical advances are being made and rural life is being transformed.

Other ambitious agricultural plans include rapid improvement of the milk and meat supply by better feeding and breeding. Russian cattle have, by traditional practice, had a deficient diet consisting largely of straw, while ignorance has prevented improving blood strains. The agricultural authorities are also working on a grandiose program for moving crop regions about the country in order to make better use of the land. The wheat belt, for instance, is to be removed from its traditional location in the Ukraine, the Kuban and the northern Caucasus to the drier regions near Asia, and the old granary is to be used for such crops as soya beans and sunflowers, which cannot be grown in the new regions, but for which the others are better suited.

Menace or Challenge?

What is the meaning of all this for us? Obviously it does not mean that we are facing a great "trade menace" from a nation which is straining every nerve to produce the goods with which to support its own population on a level which may, at the end of another ten years, be somewhere near that of our (employed) workers. Russia exports as much as she can, and at great present sacrifice to herself, in order to obtain the means of buying the machinery which she needs so desperately. She has to export because she cannot borrow much. If we wanted to finance her as we have financed bankrupt and unplanned countries, we could sell her far more, while accepting fewer imports in return. It is arrant nonsense to suppose that she could, for many years to come, flood the world with cheap wheat or export great quantities of other raw materials or manufactures.

The meaning is, rather, a sort of challenge. As a people afflicted with "spectatoritis," we could hardly find a more enthralling contest to watch than this effort to do something brand new in the world, on so audacious a scale. It may easily not succeed; the hardship it causes may lead to revolt or impaired industrial morale; or changes within the dictatorship may bring a deliberately slackened pace. If Russia, starting at scratch in wealth, equipment and skill, is able to win her five-year goal, not in four years, but even in six or in ten, Socialism will have "worked" after a fashion. Success by Russia might not convert us; there are many other values to be considered besides maximum industrial development in the shortest possible time. Our situation and problems, too, are different. We have built ample productive equipment; we need not sacrifice to increase it rapidly; what we need is control for the sake of less wasteful operation of the machines we have and better distribution of their products. But there is something in the daring of the Russian activity which, after all, seems in the American character. Might it not at least stimulate us to see what we can do with planning and effort on behalf of the whole community, in some way of our own? How long are we going to be content with the ideal of an order in which social good is nothing more than the inadvertent and precarious by-product of the competition for private gain? How long are we going to be satisfied with the praise of planlessness, of mysterious, automatic "progress"? How long shall we continue to suffer inertly the slavery of the human will to the instruments which human intelligence has created?

George Soule.

"Sold" on Foreign Bonds

III. *The Myth That We Have Supplied Necessary Capital*

AS THE preceding article pointed out, deficits in fiscal administration are the fundamental explanation of public borrowing. The incurring of the deficit is frequently excused on the ground of an alleged dearth of capital in the borrowing country. This explanation is applied to two general types of situations: first, the economically backward or new country which lacks the accumulations of saved capital found in the economically more developed lands; second, the country depleted of capital accumulations as a result of the War and its aftermath.

At the outset, let it be stated that there is never enough capital anywhere, if by capital is meant economic goods for all desirable productive uses. If there were, interest rates would fall to zero and everybody would be happily housed, fed, clothed, amused and employed. It is natural, therefore, that there should always be in progress movements of capital about the world, seeking higher interest rates and more profitable uses.

With regard to the economically backward countries, it is evident that they have less accumulated wealth per capita than the richer countries like the United States. There is less saved wealth per capita in Bolivia than in Peru; less in Peru than in Chile; less in Chile than in the Argentine; less in the Argentine than in the United States; less in the United States than in Switzerland; and so on. These comparative ratios, however, furnish no good reason why Peru should borrow to buy American submarines, Chile to buy English gunboats or Bolivia to buy arms from Vickers, to cite concrete examples, or why any government should overspend, as practically all recent borrowers in New York have been doing.

Over-Investment of Capital

It may be remarked, in passing, that, while New York investment funds were supplying the much advertised deficiency of capital in these "poor" countries, their local banks were keeping millions of dollars in the call-money market of New York, where the dearth of money was so serious in 1929 that call-money rates averaged over 8 percent and at times touched 20 percent at the peak of our now departed "new era" of prosperity.

As a matter of prosaic fact, far from being poor, all the economically new or undeveloped countries were gorged as never before in their histories with profits made during the War and the boom period which collapsed last year. Not a dearth of capital but an unwise investment of too much credit is the trouble with South America today. Capital overinvested in growing more coffee in Brazil, Colombia and Central America, more sugar in Cuba, Peru and Central America, more cotton in Peru and more wheat in the Argentine, and in producing more copper in Chile and Peru, more tin in Bolivia, more oil in Peru, Colombia and Venezuela than the world could consume—that is the true story of the "poor," "undercapitalized" Latin American countries.

The Dearth-of-Capital Myth

The first real dearth of capital since 1914 is being felt just now when the foreign bond markets refuse these governments further loans. The international bankers lent to them precisely when they were flush and least needed new money for expansion. Borrow and spend more in good times; retrench, throw people out of work and pay off borrowings in hard times—such is the policy of the international bankers for South America.

There is a sense in which it is fair to speak of a dearth of capital in new countries inviting foreign investments. In this sense American railways and industries, not a deficiteering federal government, attracted enormous imports of European capital in the past century. Roughly one-fourth to one-third of our post-war foreign-security financing has been of this healthy variety.

With regard to the war-devastated nations, the dearth-of-capital myth requires a more detailed analysis. In certain countries the War destroyed considerable amounts of wealth and, what is vastly more important, arrested the normal current accumulations of wealth required to maintain or raise standards of living. Estimates of War losses run from three hundred to four hundred billion dollars. After the War, it was indicated that victors and vanquished should go to work and, mainly with the sweat of their brows, but also with the aid of their full resources and equipment, including their foreign investments, replace what had been destroyed and make up the accumulations which were left unmade during the War.

These essential reconstructive and accumulative processes were at once subordinated to a series of demands by the military victors, most uncompromisingly sustained by France and the big economic winner, the United States, for vast surrenders of wealth, whether for war guilt or war goods. As disinterested authorities have agreed, at and since Versailles, and as subsequent events have demonstrated, anything like a full satisfaction of these de-

mands with payments from year to year in gold, goods or services was impossible. Attempts during the past eleven years to perform the impossible have furnished the greatest financial farce in history, the payment of German reparations. With this tragic farce is inextricably linked that other farce—foreign governments paying war debts to our government with funds derived from American investors. Keeping up this farce is mainly responsible for the dearth-of-capital explanation. If we were intellectually honest about the matter, we should give the farce as the real reason of the loans.

The German War Debt

The reparations-paying farce has had two periods: the tragic, or Versailles to Dawes period, 1919-1924; and the contemporary, or Dawes-Young period, 1924 to date.

During the first period Germany really undertook (not to the satisfaction of some of the Allies, however) to pay, and actually succeeded in surrendering, things of a value which the Reparations Commission places at over two billion dollars; Professor Gide, a French authority, at three and a half billion dollars; Messrs. Moulton and McGuire, American authorities, at six and a half billions; and the Germans at about ten billions. Whatever the amount, it was certainly more than Germany could part with and still keep going as a nation. These surrenders shattered Germany far more than the War, but completely failed to satisfy the victors: hence, the occupation of the Ruhr and the Dawes Plan.

How were the stupendous surrenders of wealth effected? In two ways mainly: (1) The depletion of resources of all kinds: peoples, territory, colonies, goods, money, shipping, foreign investments. Germany lost one-sixth of her productive capacity one-eighth of her area, 74 percent of her iron ore, 26 percent of her coal, practically all of her six billion dollars of foreign investments and most of her shipping. Not all of the foreign investments were sequestered, but most of them fled from German ownership and control by the German government. (2) The sale of over two billion dollars of paper marks to gullible foreign "investors," not as a calculated swindle but as an unforeseen by-product of the measures of desperation resorted to by the German government in an effort to keep up cash reparations payments as long as possible.

During the second period, Germany paid, up to March, 1930, about two billion dollars. How? By borrowing. As Professor Angell has so accurately stated in his excellent study of last year, "Capacity to pay equals capacity to borrow." According to his analysis, the average yearly deficit in German international accounts during the first five years after the Dawes Plan was a little over a billion dollars, which could only be met by annual increases in the foreign debt of the German State and of German industry and trade. This recurring deficit was made up roughly of some five hundred million dollars for the excess of imports over exports; two hundred and fifty millions for cash reparations payments (an amount which rises under the Young Plan to about $490,000,000 in the next ten years); and $300,000,000 to pay service charges on the borrowings since the Dawes Plan, this latter annual charge mounting every year in geometric progression.

It is evident that, had the Treaty of Versailles left Germany with no future reparations to pay, but merely stripped as she was by the end of 1919, she could not, without perpetual new borrowings, have paid for her necessary imports to sustain her population. The income of about three hundred million dollars a year from German foreign investments and the income from German shipping, both lost at the end of the War, were necessary to the solvency of a territorially, colonially and economically intact Germany before 1914. Borrowed money has permitted a considerable amount of reconstitution of shipping and of the economic plant, but the resulting income is naturally absorbed by the charges on such borrowing. The income cannot, therefore, serve its pre-war function of paying Germany's way or feeding the surplus German population.

Most of the popular illusions about Germany's capacity to pay grow out of a misunderstanding of the significance of the impressive German industrial machine. The fundamental fact ignored is that industrialization coincided with an increase in population from forty millions in 1870 to sixty-seven millions in 1914 without any corresponding increase in the domestic supply of food and exportable raw materials. This excessive population, mostly industrial workers in cities, and the machine necessary to its very existence, were in 1914 the strength of the German militarized empire. They are today, by the very same tokens, the weakness of the depleted and tribute-paying German republic. This industry and this excessive population were built up to conquer and live on foreign countries, not to be conquered and lived on by foreign governments. This is an economic fact which moral judgments about Germany's guilt, however valid, in no way modify.

The sight of these superb industrial plants fires the optimism of superficial foreign observers. They conclude that if foreigners can only acquire bonds or shares of these establishments, now at a high point of efficiency, they must own a highly productive asset. Nothing could be farther from fact. Germany needs for internal expenditure the entire income of her industrial production.

How Can Germany Pay?

The great mystification of this second phase of the farce has consisted in misrepresenting the true nature and effects of the so-called imports of foreign capital, which are in reality clockwise movements of book entries. Examples of this mystifica-

tion are to be found in innumerable statements by Washington officials and Wall Street bankers. It is perfectly true that since 1924 there has been a steady accumulation of wealth or of things of value to people living in Germany. It amounts to some ten billion dollars of subjective value, of which some four billions are attributed to foreign credit. Thus, it is made to appear that Germany grows in wealth more rapidly than she falls into debt.

These accumulations, however, do not mean that Germany is thereby being rendered more capable of paying reparations with an export surplus—the only possible way. A discovery of oil lands in Germany or the lowering of the American tariff, for instance, would have such a meaning. These accumulations merely mean that the German plant is being kept up so as to render its needed contribution to the support of life in Germany, not an export surplus for tribute to foreigners. As population increases and standards of living rise, the value of this plant must correspondingly increase. Washington and Wall Street have told us that the German standard of living must come down. On this point one of the world's most cultured peoples has not yet said its final word.

The Danger of More Loans to Germany

Professor Angell and others, who will doubtless recognize the validity of all the foregoing points, still endorse further loans to Germany to cover recurring deficits in the German balance of payments until they stop recurring—an eventuality which is not expected for twenty or thirty years. They tell us not to worry but to keep on lending more money to Germany. It will all work out in the sweet by and by. Undoubtedly it will. Things always do work out. In this case they will work out through cancellation of a major part of Germany's international obligations.

The question is not whether cancellation of reparations and war debts must come. The question is whether it will take a Communist or Fascist dictatorship to bring it about or whether American statesmanship will forestall this or some other equally cataclysmic way of bringing to an end the present impossible situation.

The apologists for the attitude of Washington and Wall Street fail to say exactly how a solution can be reached under the Young Plan. Germany is to eliminate her unfavorable commodity trade balance, a thing she could not do before the War —not by three hundred million dollars. Germany is to capture new and larger markets, with all the world raising tariff walls higher, England being the latest likely recruit to protectionism. In 1913 we took 7.1 percent of German exports. In 1929 we took only 7.4 percent. Yet we are to receive from the Allies in debt payments 65 percent of the grand total of $28,000,000,000 which Germany has to pay during the next fifty-nine years under the Young Plan. Unemployment in Germany has risen in the past year from under a million to nearly four millions. Why are there unemployed in Germany? The fundamental answer is the fact that German employers of labor cannot sell the goods or services these unemployed would produce if employed. Both the German industrialist and the American farmer are producing more than either can sell.

While German technological efficiency improves slowly, being already near the optimum point, that of her competitors is bound to advance more rapidly. Nations like China, Russia and India, as well as the Latin American group, are just beginning to industrialize. German commodity exports may in any one year be made to equal commodity imports by reducing stocks of imported goods on hand or fomenting exports by underselling. Such a favorable trade balance cannot, however, be kept up at the expense of profits, fixed capital and human welfare. Germany must import more than she exports and pay for this excess by invisible exports, such as the return on her investments abroad, shipping, tourist expenditures, etc.

Waiving the question of the validity of optimistic predictions as to improvement in the German economic situation which are strangely like those of our late "new era," let us face a mathematical reality. Prolonged deficit financing, till the better day dawns, is fraught with certain mathematical difficulties which the apologists consistently decline to consider. If deficits in German accounts must persist for two or three decades, as Professor Angell admits, in another fifteen years the accumulated yearly charges on her borrowings will be as large again as the present deficit. The present deficit amounts roughly to a billion dollars a year. Fifteen years of borrowing a billion dollars a year, with a 7-percent charge, will give at the end of fifteen years an added annual charge of another billion and fifty millions, or a total annual deficit of over two billions.

Fifteen years hence, if the Young Plan works and foreign investors can be found to absorb the requisite quantity of German paper, they will have each year to furnish two billion dollars, instead of one billion as at present, of new money to finance public-works constructions, productive enterprises and commercial transactions in Germany. History, arithmetic and common sense tell us that recurring deficits cannot be financed indefinitely. The mounting interest charges make it impossible.

Liquidation of the War

That such financing has gone on fairly smoothly, although the last German loan is now selling twenty points off, does not prove its soundness. A four-years' bull market proved nothing as to the soundness of security values. Success so far is a tribute to the power of the world's strongest government and richest bankers, aided by propaganda and a lack of critical thinking by the American people.

Every year the defeated German government

owes about $400,000,000 dollars less to the victors for war guilt; the victors owe about $210,000,000 less to the United States for war goods; the American government owes less to holders of Liberty bonds (ten billions since 1919); Germany owes more (about five billions since 1924) to foreigners, mostly American investors, for "productive" properties created in Germany, by Germans, which are "producing" satisfactions for people living in Germany. This magic transformation of unproductive war debts into "productive" or commercial debts is felicitously termed the liquidation of the War or the "commercialization" of reparations and War debts. Rather a travesty on the word commerce.

American statesmen and business men working in closest coöperation on these problems seem to derive no end of moral exaltation and flattering publicity for helping along this clockwise movement of credits by book entries. With equal zeal and no less unctuousness, American tariff makers see to it that everything possible is done to prevent the movement of goods or services to liquidate any part of the net indebtedness of all the late losers to the economic victor.

Specifically, the German state and municipal loans have been made because the borrowing states and cities could not with taxes alone have balanced a budget embracing all necessary and annually recurring expenditures. The present staggering floating debt of Germany is proof that, even with the combined resources of taxation and colossal foreign and domestic loans, budgets could not be balanced. The floating debt of the German Reich on May 31, 1929, was $313,000,000; on March 31, 1930, $500,000,000. The net operating deficit for the present fiscal year, not counting amounts borrowed by sound long-term loans, will be about $300,000,000. To these figures must be added those of all the different German states and municipalities, making up an even larger total.

Germany Cannot Pay Back Her Loans

The cost of government absorbs 27.3 percent of the national income in Germany, as compared with 22.2 percent in England and 11.8 percent in the United States. Reparations absorb 3 percent of national income, or 10 percent of the cost of government. Fifty-nine yearly annuities averaging $490,000,000 must be paid in goods or money having a value outside of Germany. If the German government cannot extract from German taxpayers the means of obtaining the things of value demanded, whatever the reasons for inability to furnish these things, Germany cannot pay reparations. Postponement is not fulfilment.

Washington has told the American voter and Wall Street has told the American investor something like this: "It is believed that Germany can pay reparations and the costs of government under the present admirable plan (mothered by Wall Street and disowned by its Washington father), but, owing to a dearth of capital in Germany, German political units, as well as German industry and commerce, must continue to borrow abroad to finance public-works and commercial operations. All of these uses of capital are productive; therefore, the borrowing is sound."

The German State cannot function with considerably lessened operating costs or without building new public works every year. A cut in government expenditures would yield a fiscal economy, but could this saving be transferred to foreign creditors? Throwing a hundred thousand State employees out of work would only make a further addition to the four million unemployed to be supported by the dole. It would not increase exports or diminish imports. Commercial borrowings of foreign capital are necessary because private enterprises cannot otherwise pay the high taxes required for reparations and keep fixed capital intact. The dearth-of-capital explanation, so far as Germany is concerned, is a misleading way of expressing the unescapable fact that Germany cannot pay the totality of her foreign obligations.

In Latin America public extravagances, in Europe these, plus the economic consequences of the Peace, furnish the true explanation of most of the postwar demand for American capital.

Lawrence Dennis.

In his fourth article, which will appear next week, Mr. Dennis discusses the methods of high-powered salesmanship which bankers employ to sell foreign bonds to American buyers.—The Editors.

Sophocles, Babbitt and Freud

MR. SEWARD COLLINS has taken me to task in the October number of the Bookman for my remarks on Irving Babbitt and Sophocles published in The New Republic of March 19, and I see that Mr. Gorham B. Munson also considers me unsound on this point. I had objected to Professor Babbitt's advertising his "law of measure" as one of the authentic "unwritten laws of the gods" to which Antigone appeals in the scene where she defies Creon. It is plain that Babbitt, in the name of his law of measure, has never attempted to induce anyone to defy any written law whatever; but Mr. Collins asserts that this allusion is appropriate all the same, because Babbitt is appealing to conscience like Antigone. She is vindicating moral principles which are matters not of the letter of the law but of individual insight. He refers me to a passage in "Oedipus Rex" where the laws of the gods are also invoked. I have duly looked this passage up and I find that the divine laws are here mentioned in quite a different connection. The chorus are frightened and worried by the fact that things are beginning to look bad for Oedipus: they are doing the Greek equivalent

of crossing themselves, they hope that they may be kept pure in word and deed. If Babbitt wanted a tag from Sophocles, this passage would have been much more to his purpose, but the fact is that he always uses "Antigone." I also found in Jebb's text a note which referred to a passage in Book VII of Plato's "Laws" and I duly looked this up, too. There the phrase was much closer to "Antigone" than the phrase in "Oedipus Rex"—ἄγραπτα νόμιμα, Sophocles; ἄγραφα νόμιμα, Plato—but it turned out that the "unwritten laws" in question were not the higher insights of conscience, but merely the ancient uncodified customs—in connection with education and the care of children—"commonly called unwritten laws." "Unwritten laws," then, was a common phrase which Antigone was simply using for her own purpose. If it means to her what it means to Plato, she is referring merely to the traditional custom of sprinkling earth on the bodies of the dead, in which case obviously it has nothing in common with the moral revelations of Babbitt. And if it is taken as a justification of her own moral revelations, it still seems to me that there is a grotesque discrepancy between Antigone standing up to Creon and Babbitt and Mr. Collins making themselves disagreeable over Humanism. It still seems to me that Professor Babbitt does not understand Antigone at all.

But of course Mr. Collins thinks that it is I who do not understand Antigone. He believes that by describing her as "passionate" and "fierce," I have made her into "a Greenwich Village heroine." Now in the first place, I didn't know that anyone disputed the fiery and insubordinate character of Antigone—Jebb certainly doesn't: see his introduction. Mr. Collins says that my idea of her as fierce is based on only one word in Sophocles and that merely representing a momentary and erroneous opinion on the part of the chorus; but actually the chorus again and again apply such terms as "passionate" and "fierce" to Antigone, and the line which I quoted, "fierce child of a fierce father," shows—what is plain from her behavior—that Sophocles intended Antigone to have a good deal in common with Oedipus. I suppose that even the Humanists will not dispute that Oedipus was hasty and insolent—his deplorable ὕβρις is an academic cliché. As a matter of fact, Sophocles represents the whole family, with the exception of Ismene, as exceedingly rash and bad-tempered (see the brawl between Oedipus and his father, the quarrel between the brothers, and the cursing by Oedipus of his son). Bad-tempered people are Sophocles's specialty; his characters resemble in this respect, as I said—and I said that they resembled in this respect only—the characters in O'Neill.

Granted, however, that Antigone is impetuous and willful, why does she make such an issue of performing the funeral rites for Polyneices? Mr. Collins thinks that it is a matter of "family piety and religious duty." Again, I didn't know that anyone disputed that Antigone's principal motive was affection for her brother. But this affection raises an interesting question, which must be my excuse for prolonging this controversy. In the "Antigone" as it stands in the manuscripts, and as Sophocles presumably wrote it, one of the striking features of the heroine's behavior is the fact that, though she is engaged to be married, she never mentions this fact or her fiancé. Her preoccupation with her dead brother is so complete that the existence of her lover does not make her even hesitate in her determination to sacrifice herself. She does not even go to him to complain about the edict, as a woman in love would be certain to do—especially as Haemon is Creon's son and it would have been natural for her to try to get him to intercede with his father. In fact, we hardly hear about Haemon at all till he comes to intercede on his own account. When Antigone is about to be led away, she laments that she must die unmarried, but refers to the matter only in a general way and still without mentioning Haemon, who a little while before has rushed off furious and desperate and who will kill himself after a vain effort to save her. She does, however, apostrophize Polyneices: she tells him that what she has done for him she would never have done for a husband or a child—for one can get another child or husband, but a dead brother is irreplaceable.

This, as I say, is what happens in the "Antigone" as Sophocles presumably wrote it. But Jebb, following certain other scholars, has found this version unintelligible and has proceeded to alter the text in such a way as to make Antigone more winning and human from his own point of view. In the first place, there is a scene in which Antigone's sister, the gentler and more conventional Ismene, remonstrates with Creon for robbing his son of a bride. Antigone is standing by, but it is a conversation of the kind normal in Sophocles in which only two speakers talk at a time. Now Jebb, with no textual ground at all, takes one of Ismene's lines, in which she exclaims "O beloved Haemon, how thy father wrongs thee!" away from Ismene and gives it to Antigone, and gets out of the difficulty of having the speakers change too often by attributing the next line to the chorus, who are immediately to take up the theme. Thus Antigone is given a "solitary reference to her love" which "heightens in a wonderful degree our sense of her unselfish devotion to a sacred duty." Jebb's only attempt to adduce internal evidence to make this tampering with Sophocles plausible consists of one objection on the basis of style which he himself invalidates by quoting an example of the same figure from the "Electra." And when he comes to the passage about dying for a brother rather than a husband, he rejects it altogether as spurious, in spite of the fact that Aristotle had it and quoted it and that Jebb himself is obliged to confess that he can hardly find a shadow of a linguistic reason against it. The principal argument is that certain lines have a close resemblance to a passage in Herodotus; but may

this not be merely a case of a common saying which both Herodotus and Sophocles had heard and which Sophocles makes his heroine press into service naïvely to explain and justify her behavior, just as he makes her call to her aid the phrase about the "unwritten laws of the gods"? An English friend tells me that there is a similar saying in England about the unique value of brothers as compared with lovers, and that he used to hear it as a child from his nurse. Jebb, however, finds the scene incomprehensible, and he is able to invoke the authority of Goethe, who told Eckermann that this speech of Antigone's vitiated the whole play by assigning to the heroine an "unworthy" motive after she had "given the most admirable reasons for her conduct" and "shown the noble courage of a stainless soul." But this objection had never occurred to Aristotle, and can we suppose that it would have occurred to Goethe if he had lived late enough to have read Freud?

For it is not, I believe, merely due to the accident of Sophocles's having written a play involving an incestuous relation that the Oedipus complex has been named after his hero. Mr. Collins has reproached me for showing myself "about as near to the true spirit of Sophocles as an Oedipus complex," but if he will read the passage in "Oedipus Rex" in which Jocasta tries to reassure her son-husband by telling him that men often dream of sexual relations with their mothers, he will see that there is more in common between Sophocles and Freud than he supposes. And it seems to me plain that in Antigone, Sophocles was consciously presenting a case of what we should call nowadays a brother-fixation. Sophocles did not call it that and he did not consider it from our clinical point of view; but his comprehension of human motives was profound and realistic, and it seems to me impossible not to conclude that he emphasized deliberately for his dramatic purpose the difference between Antigone's attitude toward Haemon and her attitude toward Polyneices.

When we compare Antigone to Electra, our suspicions are further confirmed. Antigone and Electra are in some ways very different: Electra is ingrown and virulent, whereas Antigone is candid and appealing. But in other ways they are remarkably alike: both are violent and ruthless, and both are contrasted with weaker, more "feminine" sisters: Electra's scenes with Chrysothemis are perfect counterparts to Antigone's scenes with Ismene. Jebb himself notes the closeness of this parallel. Furthermore, they are both passionately attached to brothers. The first things that we know about Electra are that she hates her mother and broods continually on the wrong done her father; she is morbid, vituperative and harsh, and we tend to find her rather unsympathetic. It is only when she is told that her brother is dead and presented with an urn supposed to contain his ashes that we really understand her. She breaks down over the urn, and we realize for the first time how much tenderness, affection, devotion, has been subdued and perverted by a life vowed to vengeance. It has been Orestes, whom she nursed as a child, who had been as dear to her as to his mother, whom she had not allowed to be cared for by the servants and who had called her alone among his sisters "Sister"—whose memory and the hope of whose return have kept her alive in the hated household (Euripides's Electra is married, but not Sophocles's). Then Orestes comes in and reveals himself—the brother and sister are together for the first time in ten years: the avengers drop their masks and the most moving scene in the tragedy occurs. Then Orestes, with the connivance of Electra, goes in and kills Clytaemnestra.

Now, Mr. Collins asserts that Antigone "is impelled primarily by religious conviction" and accuses me of being incapable of admitting that "the heroine of a Greek drama might have acted from noble motives." But Electra acts with a religious sanction, too: Orestes has been told by Apollo to kill his mother, and how do the Humanists stand in regard to the nobility of matricide and in regard to all the other outrageous things for which the characters in Greek plays claim divine backing? As a matter of fact, the chorus in "Electra" invokes the unwritten laws, too, in connection with Electra's obligation to her dead father—and how can you get any Humanism out of Electra? The moral philosophy which the Humanists profess to find in Sophocles seems to me pure boloney. Sophocles is essentially a dramatist, a presenter of character in conflict. If he were a modern, a blast of the black pessimism from the choruses of "Oedipus Coloneus" would have been enough to scare them off him for life. And his Freudian situations would have caused them to howl with horror.

Apropos of these latter, has no one ever written about the Freudian aspect of Antigone in connection with the much controverted brother-husband passage? If the scholars have never done so, surely the psychoanalysts must have.

EDMUND WILSON.

Almeria

Winds have no moving emblems here, but scour
A vacant darkness, an untempered light;
No branches bend, never a tortured flower
Shudders, root-weary, on the verge of flight;
Winged future, withered past, no seeds, nor leaves
Attest those swift invisible feet: they run
Free through a naked land, whose breast receives
The whole fierce ardor of a naked sun.
Thou hast the Light for lover; fortunate Earth!
Conceive the fruit of his divine desire.
But the dry dust is all she brings to birth,
That child of clay by even celestial fire.
Then come, soft rain and tender clouds, abate
This shining love that has the force of hate.

ALDOUS HUXLEY.

Washington Notes

Our Unhappy President—An Extra Session Is Probable—The Wickersham Report—Lack of Administration Leadership.

AS THIS is written a few days before the actual opening of the short session of Congress, the presidential recommendations in the scheduled message cannot of course be dealt with. They will be definitely known before this piece is printed. They will not only be known, but, as usual, they will be promptly forgotten. It would be more interesting and productive to look ahead into the next three months to discover what is in store for the unfortunate Herbert. If anything pleasant awaits him, I am certainly unable to envisage it, for it seems to me that a greater number of unwelcome and disagreeable things are piling up for his administration than any administration normally deserves. He is doomed, I am afraid, to a miserable three months—perhaps to a miserable two years.

In the first place, the chances of avoiding an extra session at this writing seem remote. Clearly the extra-session idea has no terrors for the progressive Senators, nor for several quite influential Democrats. The legislative matters which progressive Senators such as Brookhart, Norris and Borah have already announced they intend to bring up for consideration would occupy the entire eleven weeks of the session if there were not a single appropriation bill in sight. Most of this legislation happens to be peculiarly obnoxious to Mr. Hoover—the Norris Muscle Shoals plan and the debenture idea for example. To these, of course, Mr. Hoover is not only opposed, but so committed in opposition that he cannot avoid vetoing them if they are passed.

Moreover, there will be other legislation equally distasteful to the Hooverian palate, and a lot of other things besides. There will, for instance, be many long and allegedly humorous speeches by the Honorable Pat Harrison. Having been told several times that he is screamingly funny, the Mississippi statesman will spend the rest of his days striving to live up to this reputation—and unsuccessfully, so far as I am concerned. Also, I think it can be safely assumed that Mr. Heflin and Mr. Blease, both of whom close their senatorial careers on March 4, will devote their time during this session toward making it impossible to forget them. It is, I am told, Mr. Heflin's intention to sing a weekly swan song, beginning the first week. As for Mr. Blease, he has, I think, a good deal on his chest which he proposes to unload before his final separation from the public pay roll.

Also, a considerable number of days will be devoted to debate over various of Mr. Hoover's recess appointments, particularly those to the new Tariff Board. Progressive opposition to Henry P. Fletcher and Edward P. Broussard is certain. The former is not liked by the progressives because of his personal friendship and intimate political association with the hard-boiled, high-tariff overlords of Pennsylvania, from which state he comes. The latter is a friend of Senator Smoot, which is enough in progressive eyes to make him seem undesirable as a tariff commissioner. Moreover, there is a very fair prospect that Mr. Eugene Meyer, recently named governor of the Federal Reserve Board, will lose a few tail feathers before he gets over the Senate fence. I am told that Senator Carter Glass, who some days ago fired a hot shot at those seven Democratic leaders, including the three defeated presidential candidates, who proposed "coöperation" with the Republicans at this session, has some measures dealing with the stock market and the Federal Reserve Board which he proposes to offer and discuss.

The Wickersham report on the prohibition situation, with accompanying recommendations, has been promised some time before the Christmas holidays. Every day or so the newspapers publish a new forecast of the final report. These predictions have ranged all the way from a standpat attitude, in which it will be alleged that the "noble experiment" should have a further trial period, to a flat recommendation for repeal. The conflict in the reports seems to indicate that none of them is based on authentic information, and my personal belief is that the commission itself has not yet come to a definite decision. Further, I think it pretty safe to assume that the final report will be first submitted to Mr. Hoover before it goes to Congress and that when it is submitted he will have signified accord with the views of the majority. Any other idea is ridiculous. Also, any other idea than that the report will be bitterly assailed in Congress, and will not settle but foment the controversy, seems to me equally absurd. There will be, as a result of the report, many hot speeches on both sides in both chambers—and much time consumed.

There is, also, the little matter of the Treasury deficit, which Herbert will have to mention regretfully in his message, together with the questions of whether to suspend sinking-fund accumulations or wipe out the tax reduction which was so gratifyingly put into effect last year with the idea of restoring business confidence and helping industry back to normal. What a lot of hullabaloo there will be over that! What a fine time the Democrats and progressives are going to have pointing out the reasons for the deficit! How many unkind things will be said, not only of Herbert, but of our sainted Secretary of the Treasury! At least twenty campaign speeches will be delivered when the short session gets around to the deficit, the tax reduction and the general fiscal policy of the administration.

I have touched here lightly upon a few of the more important time-consuming matters, other than the appropriation bills, which are sure to come up at this session. Of course if there were any real administration leadership in the Senate or any idea of practical political direction in the White House, the situation could be held in hand, and despite chaotic conditions, the extra session could be avoided. But leadership exists in neither place. On the contrary, the feebleness of the Watson management in the Senate and the lack of intelligent and sympathetic coördination between the noble James and the Great Engineer is obvious and notorious.

Under these circumstances, the extra session seems to me, as it does to the Honorable Mr. Moses, a very strong probability, which the talk of coöperation and harmony upon the part of the Democratic leaders does not in the least diminish. Things may clear later, but almost anyone

will admit that the legislative fog at this time seems very thick indeed. Whether he succeeds in staving off the extra session or not, Mr. Hoover is certainly in for a lot of trouble. A great many unpleasant things are sure to happen to him—and so far as can be judged, not one really agreeable incident is in sight for him. If this poor fellow's luck ever changes at all it is bound to change for the better. There is no other way for it to turn but up.

Washington. T. R. B.

Seasonable Notes

GRAND HOTEL" has arrived at the National, to be acclaimed the high spot in the season, adult, wonderful, and selling out, qualities not without synonymous implications among one's friends. It is, therefore, to be reported at least, for New Republic readers, and especially for those among them who may be eager about summits and hits in the dramatic art. "Grand Hotel" enjoys the benefit of what is evidently a sure-fire effect for people at large: a lot of scenes, people passing through, characters telescoped into short portraits, quickly perceived, unexacting in detail, everything in a flash, several dramas in one, newsboys bringing in the papers, elevators rising, and the daily life bobbing along. This is partly what we had in "Street Scene," which was highly laureate, by some accounts a great drama. This is more or less what we had some years ago in "Johannes Kreisler," which failed of such success because, perhaps, it was not in the present era—its story was laid in Beethoven's time—and, therefore, less recognizable, and because Ben Ami, by acting as if it were something serious and important, threw a monkey wrench into the theatrical machinery, and so wrecked what might have otherwise been a pleasant melodrama, in which nobody was bothered by its profundity and bite and everybody was flattered by its complex pretensions.

"Grand Hotel" is at least smoother than "Street Scene." It lacks the tragedy of those West Side types whose clothes were so dramatically dingy or crude, and whose type casting was so literal; and it does not preach at the very end, which is something to its credit. It is also more European—though that hotel in Berlin, with the people who press into the lobby, is not very convincingly Continental or elegant—with the advantages and disadvantages of the European on our stage. "Grand Hotel" is an entertaining pseudo-transcription of life, packed with scenes and agreeably spiced up.

The technical wonders consist of the familiar flashes by which first one character after another is discovered, all telephoning their graphic situations, and after that of a succession of settings in which we get the stories of the young clerk with a bad heart, doomed to die, a stenographer, a corporation president, and, most of all, the tragedy of a young baron turned crook and a Russian dancer, whose life before his advent had gone drab and hopeless. He is killed trying to rob the magnate's room; the dancer goes off to her Prague engagement, ignorant of his death, hoping that he will follow her, according to his promise. New guests come pouring into the hotel; life, somewhat obviously, goes on.

Some realistic conviction is given to the dramatic personages by Mr. Siegfried Rumann's portrayal of the magnate; to a mild degree, Continentally speaking, by Mr. Henry Hull's baron; and quite fully and poignantly by Miss Eugenie Leontovich, who was entirely convincing as the Russian dancer. In general, "Grand Hotel" is a pleasantly entertaining melodrama, expertly kept going, negligible, full of variety and obvious click.

Miss Helen Gahagan

Mr. Belasco's new production, "Tonight or Never"—adapted by the Huttons from the Hungarian of Lili Hatvany—goes off with the familiar smoothness that this master of our theatrical tradition is unfailingly able to achieve. Merely tolerable players appear to know something of acting; and a sort of stage glamor descends on persons who in the ordinary run of productions would be flat enough. The play leaves our daily prose and takes on, even if it is mere journalism, a sort of shine. Good or bad, it has this added light upon it; upon the event shines the light of the special occasion, and the romance, however brilliant or tawdry, of the footlights coming on and the rising of the curtain. This, I maintain, is the first essential of the theatrical art, this shine, luster, folly, excitement and heightened domain. After that the content, the truth, the value of the play appear, none of them, however deep or admirable, entering into this particular stage art until it has first acquired this hue and taken on this glow.

The story of the play is the familiar stage trumpery of the stage artist—a prima donna will serve best of all—with her triumphs, her need for love and romance, and the young man who brings these assets into her life. No need to stay on that.

The chief item to report of this new Belasco production is the return of Miss Helen Gahagan to the stage. We may remember, some six or seven seasons ago, Miss Gahagan stepped out of college halls into a silly play, full of lumbermen, love and woods, as I remember it, by Mr. Owen Davis, and was acclaimed all the twelve most beautiful women in New York, twelve in one, that is, a second Duse, and so on, all of which meant that an uncommonly beautiful young lady had appeared on our stage, with the familiar lack of training but with a remarkable facility and adaptability for stage purposes. Miss Gahagan, after that, played in various roles, the most completely engaging of which was her Trelawney, and the most beautiful her performance in Hasenclever's "Beyond" at the Provincetown Playhouse.

Miss Gahagan's present performance shows an immense growth, in range especially. Comedy—which after all, except in the case of persons who are born side-splitting, is apt to proceed from mother wit—has been added to her possibilities. Her playing of the comic passages in "Tonight or Never" is capital. What she brings back with her, most of all, of course, is a well trained and beautiful voice, dramatic and exciting. We need not bother about the play, though that has a certain bubbling sparkle to it. What we get is an occasion rouged up with prima-donna romance, very cleverly spaced with singing, and blessed at last with a curtain descending on the *cosi* of *"vissi d'arte,"* with an old-time theatrical thrill that brings the house to Miss Gahagan's feet.

MR. ARTHUR SINCLAIR

Mr. Jed Harris's production of the "Mr. Gilhooley" adaptation is now, in the swiftly flying season, a thing of the past. But there remains from it an instance that bears on the art of acting and that, even at this late date, may be noted.

In this story of a bachelor who takes up a girl from the streets and ends by letting her stay to keep his house, while she eats her heart out for a lover who has deserted her, we have one of those genre pieces that point remotely back to Henri Becque and "Les Corbeaux," but arrive very much by way of the Irish and Manchester schools. A certain evenness of tone, a certain preservation of the genre, are necessary; but the passion and color of life must continuously press against the drab and quiet exterior. In this genre sense, Mr. Sinclair was a good choice for the role. And, since the role took up such a large part of the play, one might easily have thought that Mr. Sinclair's presence would do much to preserve the right security in its tone. One might have expected a great deal from this actor of the Irish Theater.

Mr. Sinclair won the most hectic praise in many quarters. As a matter of fact, I am certain that his performance did as much as anything else to kill the play. By the time the last act arrived, I cared less than nothing about what happened to the leading character. It is one of those cases, like Miss Ann Harding's, for another instance, where an actor seen on the stage for ten minutes, for a short scene, a momentary effect, however sharp, appears to be a remarkable performer. One says that a star is at hand, and that a play should be found to provide a just vehicle. In reality the actor is incapable of sustaining the necessities of a long performance. He lacks the accumulation of pressure, the growing mass of emphasis, the power to hold our imaginations after we have seen him a while. The result is that, by the time the moment arrives when he shall turn the screw in our emotions and bind our attention to what he represents in the play, we find ourselves faced with an indefinable flatness and surprising indifference. For this reason Miss Harding in a leading role is better in the moving pictures. Mr. Sinclair—taken simply, a smooth and able actor, excellent in small or incidental parts within his scope, full of tricks that are neatly covered up—had little to bring to the long line and dramatic progression of the play, which gradually lost color and contagion, and grew dim and drab around him.

STARK YOUNG.

Two

This is the gift they do exchange
Which Sheba changed with Solomon:
That which, in taking, each puts off,
That which, in giving, each puts on:

When, self-invited to this fresh
Immortal banquet of the flesh,
She that partaketh still is food,
And man puts on his womanhood.

L. A. G. STRONG.

The Janacek Festival Mass

THE MOMENT of art is frequently the one directly after an order of things has reached its head and begun to subside. One system is retreating, another advancing; and the position of the artist is upon the watershed between the two worlds. His regard is a traveler's over the country from which he has just climbed; his synoptic view, the effect of the sudden distance of what, an hour since, enveloped him. Hence, the appearance of "The Divine Comedy" at the stage immediately following that of medievalism's greatest force; and the similarly postmeridional appearance of many lesser syntheses.

Some such law must be advanced to explain the continued production of music richly nationalistic in idiom, color and tone in a world rapidly standardizing and dressing itself into line. Strongly as it has attracted gifted composers in every land, the recent tendency away from idioms based on folk songs, folk dances and racial speech rhythms, accents and cadences, towards a catholic, international style, is by no means the most productive of those now current. From Hungary to California, from Finland to Mexico and Brazil, a majority of composers are still developing musical equivalents for local peculiarities; with an authority which one of the newest of these paraphrases, the "Festival Mass" of the Slovakian Leos Janacek, lately performed in New York by the Friends of Music, very amply demonstrates. Fascism and Communism may be aligning themselves for a fray, bound, whichever of them wins, to obliterate localisms and national and racial distinctions; particularly those of the smaller groups. The machine age may be rolling like one of its own levelers over the irregularities of the earthly landscape. Nevertheless, this not yet three-year-old mass is music born of frankest gropings for the sources of a national consciousness; art conceivable as a reply to the naïve question of what God intended when he created his peasant race of good Slovakians.

Indeed, Moussorgsky stands as luminously in the ascendant over it as he stood over all modern music previous to the rise of neo-classicism—even though Janacek's fiery idiom is no less distinct from the great Russian' than that of any other nationalist, Sibelius's or Chavez's, Bartok's or De-Falla's. It has a buoyancy, an idealism contrasting very sharply with the melancholy of Moussorgsky's noble style. And still the "Festival Mass" makes us feel the guidance of Moussorgsky in every one of its movements; all thoroughgoing musical nationalism referring to him by virtue of the purity with which he originated its type and embodied its idea. While a kind of zealotry in music is as old as "Der Freischütz" and very evident in "Die Meistersinger," it never completely dominated previous to "Boris Godounov."

Essentially romantic, the type and idea of the nationalistic composition is still different from the Weberian, Wagnerian one. The romanticism of Weber and of Wagner virtually is an expression of the individual, the singular personage. The group, the race, is never all-important in it, maugre the marvelous invention of Hans Sachs. Wagner's composition of "Tristan" in a Venetian palace and salutation of the comet over the Piazza as the symbol of the

extraordinary and the transient exclusively interesting him in life, beautifully represent the spirit of his art. "Boris Godounov," on the contrary, expressed the singularity of groups: the racially, not the personally, exceptional. Its art is primitivistic, bucolic, humble; sympathetic to anonymous and group expressions, local rhythms, accents and cadences in their least comformable states, liturgical and traditional refrains preserved by peasants and other classes of people least influenced by foreign contacts. Some of the predilection of a Moussorgsky for folk material is indubitably to be ascribed to the universal love of sheer novelty and color. But the great reason of it, for all that, is its serviceableness in the bath of collectivity, its instrumentality in the encompassment through musical means of the impulse, character and nature of a people. There is corroborative significance in the fact that the chief protagonist in "Boris" is none of the personages, but the great anonymous chorus, vessel of the helpless suffering, childish joy and saintly candor supposed to be the destiny of all Russians, old, medieval and modern.

Janacek's choral work fits easily into the category established by this drama. Itself the independent treatment of a mass in an ancient slavonic text; not without certain parallelisms to the Magyar nationalist Kodaly's setting of the "Psalmus Hungaricus"; it is couched in a musical idiom based directly and with a minimum of conventionalization on Slovakian folk songs and dances. The fruit of a long and exhaustive study of national speech rhythms, it aims to constitute a musical equivalent for the energy, fire and action of the Slovakian peasants. The quality of the music is rude, the coloring somber, the manner boisterous and explosive. A strongly accented rhythm of the brasses and drums at the commencement of the "Introit" immediately sets the rough tone of a peasant ritual, homely in its solemnity, anguish and joy. The style is naïve throughout. Never commenting or underlining the text, the orchestra contents itself with abrupt antiphonies to the choral music and spirited embodiments of the general idea. The assurance of one commentator to the effect that we are not to hear the tones of "mystical meditation, self-commiseration or pessimistic outcry" or the expressions of "attendants of a mystical and symbolical ceremony," is quite superfluous. Peasant language in all its parts, even in its complex passages for the organ, the mass is plainly the enunciation of a peasant faith, bare of introspection and brooding, and energetic to the point of physical gesture.

Not that all of it is equally successful. The "Credo" is slightly dry. The melodic line in other movements occasionally wants spontaneity. The organ toccata introduced near the close has a troublingly scholastic cast. Nevertheless, the body of the mass, in particular the "Gloria," the "Sanctus" and the "Agnus Dei," have a fine spareness and something like the fire and pungence of old beverages, the homely charm of old oaken furniture; and impress us with their unpretentious pathos and simple eloquence.

Just what there is about this worthy music, making us none the less aware of an issueless charm and beauty amidst our pleasure, we cannot say. Possibly the middling quality of much of the inspiration is premonitory. Whatever the reason, the sense of an impasse mingles ineluctably with our appreciation: during the very performance we somehow knew that there was no future for explorations along the line of exceptional color and feeling like this one; and came away convinced we would not be given many more such musical expressions of folk and soil. That impression remains. Despite this charm, realizations of the sort of Janacek's peasant mass no longer are quite pertinent. The growing uniformity of life is whirling us away from all dissimilarities and uniquenesses. Importance is going out of the race, the nation, the background, as it went out of the individual. We are again entering a period of cosmopolitanism; and the disappearance of nationalistic feeling cannot but greatly limit the folk songs's creative interest and folklore's pregnancy. Local peculiarities will not, to be sure, entirely cease influencing art; people will continue loving their homes, their lands. But these idiosyncracies will probably do little more than inflect the idioms of the new catholic composers: as their backgrounds and descents the personalities of citizens of the world. They will scarcely again be made the subjects of deliberate stylizations in the nationalistic idea; primitivistic music charged with racial mysticism. It seems that to survive in this world, music will once more have to become universal; and composers embrace not mere individuals and groups, but humanity and a whole earth.

PAUL ROSENFELD.

CORRESPONDENCE

Professor Schmitt Defends His War Guilt Thesis

SIR: It is always an invidious task for an author to protest against the statements of a reviewer. Nevertheless, Mr. Harry Elmer Barnes's review of my book, "The Coming of the War: 1914," in your issue of October 22, contains certain remarks which cannot be allowed to pass unnoticed.

Thus he says that "Professor Schmitt as editor of The Journal of Modern History has excluded source material of the highest importance from its columns when detrimental to the Entente legend." Here are the facts: The issue has arisen only once, in the case of a communication from Mr. Barnes himself. In April, 1929, he submitted to me for publication in The Journal a letter received by him from Baron von Schoen, the German ambassador in Paris in 1914, giving me permission to make any comment I might desire, provided I publish Schoen's letter *in toto*. After due consideration, I replied, under date of April 29, 1929, as follows:

> I have read with great interest your communication on the German declaration of war on France. The impression I get is that M. Poincaré questions the good faith of Baron von Schoen and the latter calls the former a liar. In Schoen's letter to you there is only one point that is new, namely, his statement that "in both telegrams the very same portions of the text, namely, those that concern the frontier violation by the French troops, were made unreadable by the transposition of the code ciphers and, in fact, by unmistakably systematic falsification." That seems to me an important fact. The rest of Schoen's letter is simply argument with Poincaré and does not seem to me suitable for publication in The Journal.
>
> Upon referring to the German Documents, No. 716, which is the telegram in question, I find that it is printed there in the form in which it was sent from Berlin and not in the form in which it was received from [sic for "in"] Paris, which is the essential point. If you can secure from Baron von Schoen the text of the telegram as he received it in Paris, that would be an important document which I should be happy to publish in The Journal.

Instead of accepting this offer (no reply has ever been received

to my letter), Mr. Barnes preferred to get his communication published elsewhere and now brings an unfounded charge against me.

Mr. Barnes also writes that "he [Schmitt] gives us numerous outright mistranslations of the documents for July, 1914, in every case designed to make the Austro-German policy seem more drastic than it really was." I do not claim to be infallible in the matter of translation, but the insinuation that my translations were not made in good faith has to be emphatically repudiated. I do not wish to have mistakes in my book, and I shall be grateful to any reader who will inform me of errors of translation.

Again: in order to prove my hopeless Anglomania, Mr. Barnes lifts out of its context part of a sentence from the preface to my "England and Germany" published in 1916: "As a beneficiary of the Rhodes Trust I was imbued with the idea of Anglo-Saxon solidarity." What I wrote was (page vii):

> The Anglo-German problem first came under my notice some years ago, when I was an undergraduate at Oxford. A beneficiary of the Rhodes Trust, I was imbued with the idea of Anglo-Saxon solidarity, to promote which Cecil Rhodes founded the scholarships which bear his name. But, instead of harmony, I found discord. Some of my Oxford friends were members of the British Navy League, and from them I learned that the German navy was regarded as a menace to England's traditional supremacy of the seas. When I traveled in Germany I encountered considerable animosity to England in several places. . . . At every turn one was made conscious of this rivalry between two kindred nations, each of which professed to fear the aggressive intentions of the other. The most contradictory statements were heard, and the stranger was at a loss to comprehend them.

To the Rhodes scholars of pre-war days, Anglo-Saxon solidarity mean Anglo-German-American solidarity, for it will be remembered, there were also German Rhodes scholars. To give a just representation of my limitations, Mr. Barnes should have quoted the whole paragraph.

In his discussion of my treatment of the background of the War, Mr. Barnes says, apropos of the annexation of Bosnia: "In Schmitt's version (Vol. I, pp. 121ff.) the whole episode was a devilish plot of Aehrenthal and the Austrians. Izvolsky is tucked away innocently in a single sentence at the end, with no intimation of Russian initiative in the affair." Yet the first sentence of the last footnote on page 126 reads: "The first suggestion of the annexation in any published document occurs in a memorandum of the Russian government presented to the Cabinet of Vienna in July, 1908." A little further on Mr. Barnes remarks that "Schmitt says nothing of the British encouragement of war at Reval in 1908 and of Lloyd George's Mansion House Speech of 1911; nothing of the French urging of the Russians to go ahead in November, 1912; nothing of Russia's real plans in the Balkan League of 1912-14 or in the Ministerial Conference of February, 1914." Actually, each of these topics is mentioned or discussed, in the following pages respectively: I, 39; I, 46; I, 20-22; I, 86, 130-131, 135, 143, 164; I, 96-98. My interpretation of these incidents may not be the same as Mr. Barnes's, but I have not ignored the issues.

When he comes to the crisis of 1914, Mr. Barnes writes that "the plan for a sudden Austrian attack on Serbia was not designed to precipitate a European war, but to prevent it by localizing the struggle" and that "every informed student knows this." His language seems to imply that I represent the Austrian plan as intended to precipitate a general war. Nowhere is this thesis maintained. My view is thus expressed (I, 371-372): "Naturally they [the Austro-Hungarian statesmen] hoped that Russia would stand aside. But, convinced as they were that war with Serbia was necessary, they were satisfied to know that Germany had promised her assistance; with this assurance they were prepared to face Russian intervention, if that was the price of war with Serbia." This is rather different from what Mr. Barnes implies.

He also complains that I cite the famous Wiesner telegram of July 13 from the Austro-Hungarian Red Book of 1919 instead of from the 1930 edition of the documents, and suppress the fact that the telegram reached Vienna late in the afternoon of July 13; after which he continues: "By citing the Red Book he is enabled to make the reader believe that Tisza was influenced to favor war by the German Ambassador and not by the Wiesner Report on Serbian responsibility for the murder of the Archduke." I am quite unable to understand his reasoning. Although I do not state in so many words that the telegram reached Vienna in the late afternoon, I do say that "Herr von Wiesner on July 13 telegraphed to Count Berchtold"; also that "whether Count Berchtold showed the telegram to Tisza at their conference is not disclosed in any document" (I, 363): in other words my narrative assumes that Berchtold had the telegram when he talked with Tisza. I leave to Mr. Barnes the responsibility for the statement that Tisza was converted by the Wiesner telegram (a theory, so far as I am aware, never propounded before), but I must remark that nowhere do I argue that "Tisza was influenced to favor war by the German Ambassador." I do not even allege that the latter saw Tisza before his conversion, because there is no evidence that he did. I confine myself to quoting what Tisza said to the ambassador after he had accepted Berchtold's policy (I, 356-357, 363).

Lastly, I must protest against the disingenuous use made of my treatment of what Mr. Barnes calls "Grey's meteorological hypothesis of war responsibility," according to which "Germany was planning a war in 1914 because it was in the summertime, which was the same season of the year that she launched the attack (which she did not launch) on France in 1870." Mr. Barnes was so shocked to find me "seriously defending its plausibility" that he had "to lay off his reading for an hour." He fails to hint that I present documentary evidence in support. If the curious reader will turn to Vol. II, p. 136, he will note that Grey's statement is relegated to a footnote, and that I then say: "This remark of the British foreign secretary has been bitterly repudiated by German writers, but it was apparently not lacking in justification, if Wenninger was correctly informed." Wenninger was the Bavarian military attaché in Berlin, and in the text I quote his report to the effect that Moltke, the chief of the general staff, was pressing for war because, among other reasons, "finally the time of year is favorable, for the harvest has been for the most part gathered and the annual period of military instruction is completed." In fairness, Mr. Barnes should have called attention to the conditional clause in my statement.

I am not concerned now with defending the correctness of my opinions and statements. The purpose of this letter is to show that Mr. Barnes has made unwarranted assertions about myself, that he has accused me of avoiding issues which I actually discuss and that he has ascribed to me views which do not find expression in the book.

BERNADOTTE E. SCHMITT.

Chicago, Ill.

"One Writer Calls for Silence: Another Says Wilder Is O. K."

SIR: I cannot spend all my waking hours in a state of active concern about either the social order, or earning my living, or striving for my individual ideals. Therefore, Mr. Gold's attack increases my desire to read Mr. Wilder's books. There is a slowly increasing number of Americans who occasionally feel the need of something beautiful and far away, especially of a tired evening. There are also social workers who feel this need. Visions like Mr. Wilder's, whatever their flaws, help us indirectly to conceive a more gracious life than we now live; they contribute very directly to the charm of a leisure hour. Furthermore, if it is Mr. Wilder's peculiar talent to paint for us with a light touch the remote and the beautiful, he is very wise not to deal with present-day America, the field which Mr. Gold accepts so readily as the limits of his vigorous but crude understanding. Indeed, it is fortunate that Mr. Wilder and his many readers are not, mentally, so smug as Mr. Gold.

WALTER C. BARNES.

Flemington, N. J.

SIR: I am somewhat surprised that you printed the various letters about Michael Gold's review of Thornton Wilder's books, unless, indeed, you were willing for Mr. Wilder's admirers to destroy him completely—a result which Mr. Gold, despite unmistakable intentions, failed to achieve.

Leaving aside, for the moment, the merits of Mr. Gold's review, it is apparent that there is life in his pen. Nothing I have read in The New Republic during the past two years has delighted me so instantly as his outburst on Wilder—or, apparently, disturbed some others so deeply.

I am completely opposed to the principles of Communism for reasons which may or may not be adequate, and thus would be forced to disagree with Mr. Gold on practically all questions of economic theory. But I doubt if he would be able to write a formal review without seizing the opportunity to state his beliefs concerning the organization of society. Although I deplore this fact, it did not seem important to me in reading his review.

His criticism of Mr. Wilder was based not so much upon theoretical economic grounds as upon what I should call (in defiance of the reviewer, I use the term, and in deference to him, the quotations marks) a profoundly "religious" objection to Mr. Wilder's works—all of them. While this objection was not stated in so many words, it was most certainly conveyed. Incidentally, if phrased clearly and precisely, it would seem much more brutal and painful to Mr. Wilder's friends than Michael Gold's splendid slashings. . . .

Such, it may be said, is not the function of criticism. But it is pertinent to note how few able critics, past or present, have not been concerned, either openly or unconsciously, with what people —particularly writers—ought to regard as important. . . .

Chicago, Ill. WILLIAM GIRDNER.

SIR: I cannot refrain from comment on Mr. Gold's stimulating and provocative examination of the writings of Thornton Wilder. There is so much force, vigor and plausibility in these comments that perhaps it is not unfair in the interests of a balanced view to state what may be another side.

Admit the preciousness in Wilder, and the rhetorical dryness and attenuated atmosphere. Admit even that he does not seemingly impinge on the American scene. Still, to at least one other reader, what Mr. Wilder seems to be trying to do is neither so dull nor so remote as might at first sight appear. Needless to say, I write this with no more first-hand evidence than Mr. Gold possesses.

But also I do not write from a class-conscious, economic determinist view such as the one that seems to obtrude through some of Mr. Gold's paragraphs, and which may perhaps color in a peculiar way his reading of this author. No doubt I am guilty in Mr. Gold's eyes of the same defects of class outlook of which Mr. Wilder stands accused! However—

I see this author secondarily a story teller and primarily a preacher in intent. The stock brokers' suicides, the strikes, the Babbittry and the rest are presumably not unfamiliar to him. Nor is his failure to use them as direct subject matter mere romanticizing escape. He is, on the contrary, profoundly disturbed. And he seems constantly asking himself: "What if any is the way out of the hatred, selfishness, brutishness and cussedness with which the world seems saturated?"

His personal answer may be some sort of "new parlor Christianity" for all I know. But he has not yet said so in these books. He has merely averred with a natural literary moderation that when all is said and done the importance of a certain attitude toward living is transcendent. This is an individual attitude. Its comings and goings are obscure; "we know not the day nor the hour" of its upthrust into the personal life. It is a loving attitude. It is the attitude of the wise father to his children. It is the releasing, the influencing, the humanly creative and re-creative attitude. Presumably it was the attitude of Jesus, and one which historically his life has come peculiarly to symbolize.

One can say so much as a humanist, a zionist, an ethical culturist—or even a socialist! Indeed the prophets and the exponents of the social utility of a loving sentiment actuating the conduct of individuals are now many. That they have made slower work than one might wish of "leavening the whole lump" is due to many factors. Mr. Gold—if one may read between the lines—presumably sees the social program as at least of equal importance with the loving heart. But the social program, one imagines, is a revolution growing out of a definitive class antagonism based on economic interests. Whether or not it is Mr. Gold's own view, there is in this connection the view that the more hatred, the more class division; the more class division, the sooner the great applecart will be upset. What is contemplated after that is probably a Communist experiment comparable to Russia's.

All of which is not inconceivable. It may be in the cards.

But it is also conceivable that in America a new and different line of economic emergence may be followed. It is conceivable that in our period of transition from an economy of acquisitiveness to an economy of social utility, individuals imbued with a fraternal attitude toward their fellows may be helpful guides and leaders. It is conceivable that loving attitudes, if they can become more generalized, can be creative attitudes for the support and inception of a sounder economic order. . . .

New York City. ORDWAY TEAD.

SIR: In her letter on Michael Gold's review of Thornton Wilder, your correspondent, Jeanette B. Peabody, has made a far-reaching contribution to literary criticism. "Why," she asks, "did you allow a Jew to write a review of books written by a man who acknowledges himself the apostle of Anglo-Catholicism?" It was time, at last, for someone to avow the principle behind this question. I have always believed that authors are beyond the comprehension of those of alien race or religion. The arrogant ignorance of German criticism of Shakespeare has long been notorious, but we English-speaking peoples have not been without blame in our inevitably obtuse comments on Goethe. And can there be serious doubt that one important reason for the waning influence of our Christian Churches lies in the futile habit of Christian ministers of basing their teachings in part on the alien writings of Hebrew prophets? Finally, our Western civilization is suffering from malaise and confusion of values, because its educational systems have been nurtured in the irrelevant writings of Plato, Aristotle and other pagan Greeks.

Cambridge, Mass. ALSO FROM CAMBRIDGE.

SIR: The blood boils at seeing a kind old lady insulted. However, this particular old lady, Mr. Wilder's work so far, may be another Lon Chaney. There is something not quite right about her. She is dressed as a woman, she speaks as one, her face shows the wrinkles of time and of emotion—but what would she look like in the plain daylight? Would the wrinkles really exist, or would unpleasant and improbable streaks of grease paint give the game away? And if she is read, is she quite as mature as she appears to be? In other words, is Mr. Wilder's somewhat tremulous achievement in earnest, and if so, is it of any unusual significance?

The waters are troubled and the objects at the bottom cannot be seen clearly. A view from the shore line, since the light that plays on the surface and gives beauty to the scene may serve to hide the shallowness of the water. Why should Mr. Gold be rebuked for attempting to see down, past the ripples? . . .

Toronto, Canada. JAMES DYCE.

SIR: In your issue of November 5, I noticed severe condemnations directed against Mr. Michael Gold for his criticism on Mr. Wilder, the Black and White Vice Mongler. One writer calls for silence, another says that Wilder is O.K., that the average reader doesn't understand his meaning. Why doesn't he? Aren't Americans educated people? Are they to be fed on Black and White Vice without their knowledge? The newspaper gangster would says "yes." They profit in it. The notorious author would say "yes." We can mingle around vice dens and pick our material without travel and the clerical hypocrite would say: "Well, as long as wicked society likes it, I guess it's all right." But if the public knows what it is all about there would be Hell-fire right on earth. . . .

Chicago, Ill. ANTON HAUOT.

The World of Robert Frost

Collected Poems, by Robert Frost. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 349 pages. $5.

IN ONE of the poems in his "West Running Brook," Frost says,

> I have been one acquainted with the night.
> I have walked out in rain—and back in rain.
> I have outwalked the furthest city light.

He has known, he would tell us, what the world has to offer of pain and sorrow. He is not unfamiliar with the experiences that make men grieve and despair. If he has kept his sanity, it is not because he has blinded himself to the elements in life that make men mad. But to him as a poet the most important result of his acquaintance with sorrow has been the realization that the exercise of the creative faculties is independent of circumstance—

> And further still at an unearthly height
> One luminary clock against the sky
>
> Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right.
> I have been one acquainted with the night.

This is vigorous doctrine in an age that has been fertile in self-analysis and self-commiseration. Frost's credo, however, runs counter to the consensus of opinion of the critics of all ages as well as to the temper of his own era. Matthew Arnold summarized the verdict of most students of letters when he said, "For the creation of a master work of literature two powers must concur, the power of the man and the power of the moment, and the man is not enough without the moment." Wordsworth said something of the same sort, and perhaps came closer to the difficulties of our own time, when he pointed out that facts and ideas have to become familiar to mankind, have to become part of common human experience, before the poet can use them. The poet cannot accept them until they are "ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood." So much in modern life has not been assimilated to organized human experience, so many of our acts and thoughts are unrelated to any central purpose or unifying hypothesis, so many obstacles stand in the way of the much-discussed modern synthesis, that the poet must grow desperate who looks for the order of ideas, the intellectual and spiritual atmosphere, that Arnold says he needs. It is no wonder that most poets and critics would say that a time may indeed be either wrong or right and that the present time is decidedly wrong.

So strong is the case for this view of literature that we may omit the task of defending it in detail, and, instead, ask ourselves how it is possible for Frost to hold the contrary opinion. The answer is to be found, of course, not in any critical writings of his but in his poetry. "Collected Poems" shows and shows clearly that Frost has written as fine poetry as any living American and that the proportion of first-rate poetry to the whole is greater than that in the work of any other contemporary. This last point is important, not because quantity matters, but because so many American poets, after a brief productive period, have slipped into silence or mediocrity. The fact that Frost's power is not only intense but also sustained forces us either to accept his theory or find some other explanation of his achievements.

What the other explanation may be is suggested when we realize how compact and unified Frost's work is. Instead of writing about this aspect of our civilization and that, instead of yielding himself to the casual inspirations of unrelated phenomena, he has occupied himself with a limited body of experiences. He has, in short, found, for poetic purposes, a world of his own. In so doing he is not, obviously, alone among contemporary poets: Robinson, Aiken, Eliot, each has his own world. But Frost's world is different from the world of any of these other poets, in that it is related to a real world with definite boundaries in time and space. That is why his poetry is more substantial than the poetry of any of the others, why his people are three-dimensional, why his figures of speech are always concrete and non-literary. His world is not an artificial, intellectual abstraction from the real world; it is set apart from the rest of the world by geographical and historical facts. Of course his world is not to be completely identified with the rural New Hampshire of the maps and books of statistics; it is, after all, his world. But it is directly related to rural New Hampshire, as Dante's world was directly related to medieval Europe and Shakespeare's to Elizabethan England.

Let us enter Frost's world and examine its advantages for the poet. What we do not find is perhaps more important than what we do. We find, in the first place, nothing of industrialism, and since at present so many of both the demands and the accomplishments of the machine are unrelated to the permanent hopes and impulses of the human heart, the absence of this phenomenon is significant for the poet. In the second place, we look in vain for evidences of the disrupting effect that scientific hypotheses have had on modern thought. The natives may have heard that

> "The trouble with the Mid-Victorians
> Seems to have been a man named John L. Darwin."

But the fundamental problems of conduct and destiny are still considered in terms older and richer in emotional connotations than the phraseologies of Darwinian biology and Einsteinian physics:

> "Go 'long," said I to him, he to his horse.

Frost, living in that world, can afford to look with amusement on the bewildered modern—

> A baggy figure, equally pathetic
> When sedentary and when peripatetic.

Finally, to take a third example of the absence in Frost's world of some of the less assimilable factors in our civilization, there is the matter of Freudianism. He is still free to treat love in the language of an era before psychoanalysis was known. When he is in New York he may be told,

> "Choose you which you will be—a prude, or puke,
> Mewling and puking in the public arms."

But he can reply,

> "Me for the hills where I don't have to choose."

It remains to summarize briefly some of the things that can be found in Frost's world. For purposes of his narrative verse he can find not merely pathos but also, because there are certain standards implicit in that world, something close to tragedy. He can find subjects for comedy there, dramatic conflicts, objects of natural beauty. He can treat abnormality and yet keep it in its place, or he can find a theme for as illuminating a commentary on failure as Robinson ever wrote. In the contemplation of nature he can, as scores of lyrics show, find the beginnings of

paths that lead straight to the problems that have perennially perplexed the mind of man. He can, in short, find opportunity and stimulus to exercise to the full the poetic imagination.

There is one thing, of course, Frost cannot do: he cannot contribute directly to the unification, in imaginative terms, of our culture. He cannot give us the sense of belonging in the industrial, scientific, Freudian world in which we find ourselves. The very limitations that are otherwise so advantageous make it impossible. That is why no one would think of maintaining that he is one of the great poets of the ages. To that extent the time, even though he refuses to lay the responsibility at its door, is not right. But, if the time is so completely wrong as there is reason to suspect, no poet, however great his genius, could render that ultimate service of the imagination. Every poet today is necessarily a limited poet. Frost's relative greatness lies in the fact that, endowed with the power, he discovered a way to make the time as favorable for the exercise of that power as it could possibly be. He told the story himself when he said of the star in the stone boat—

> Such as it is, it promises the prize
> Of the one world complete in any size
> That I am like to compass, fool or wise.

He compassed it, and we should be considerably the poorer if he had not.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

Sailors and a Soldier

The Old China Trade, by Foster Rhea Dulles. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 228 pages. $4.

A Yankee Adventurer: The Story of Ward and the Taiping Rebellion, by Holger Cahill. New York: The Macaulay Company. 296 pages. $3.50.

MADAGASCAR in the late seventeenth century was a nest of Yankee pirates who equipped their ships and spent their gains at home. Our more reputable mariners made their fortunes in niggers, rum and molasses. Piracy flourished as privateering during the Revolution, and at the peace, which closed the British trade routes, our merchants had more ships in their docks than they could handle. They turned to China. In boats no larger than those of the Norse, Keltic and Iberian fishermen who had preceded the settlers of our shores; with instruments as crude, with no charts, these youthful sailors, driven by their masters' need of capital, served the exacting tastes of Mandarins—glutted these tastes, overworked the supplies of sandalwood in the South Seas and nearly exterminated the sea otter in the Russian North. The butchery of whales was pursued with the same ruthlessness with which furriers devoted lifetimes in the Spanish South to killing and skinning one seal after another all day long.

Our greedy and deliberate debauchery of red Indians, Alaskans and Polynesians testifies that the modest part we took in smuggling opium into China affords but precarious ground for moral reassurance, for it was modest only because the British were so earnestly determined to remain leaders, at least in this aspect, of human development. The impression left by "The Old China Trade" is that ours was the case of a crane among the storks.

The clipper ships brought us close to the lands whither Columbus and the early explorers of our embarrassing continent believed some Passage led. In Salem, the most famous of our maritime cities, was born (1831), of the best blood in town, Frederic Townsend Ward, the founder of the modern Chinese army and the subject of Holger Cahill's biography. Any old fellow he saw in his boyhood had doubled the Horn, scattered copies of the Declaration of Independence in the ports of call, troubled Spanish and Manchu officials and maintained friendly relations with Franciscan monks and Polynesian girls; landing in port one morning he walked home as though nothing had happened. The ornaments of amiable life in Salem were Cantonese; East Indian punkas satisfied the taste which now demands electric fans; the food, the housemaids, the linen closets, all smelled of China. The smells came from over the seas, and Ward first turned sailor.

He rose in the China trade to be a mate, but this was for a merchant who had already started to turn his capital into railroads and mills. A privateer in 1812, this merchant lived to see his country's flag vanish almost from the water. Boston was sucking Salem. New York was sucking Boston. The capital barbarously acquired on the sea was to be multiplied in the exploitation of the land, with a barbarism softened only by the natural checks of a self-consuming people and a "high standard of living."

But Salem was born of the sea; the sea gave Salem its meaning. Its moral quality of light-heartedness in hard adventure called its citizens, like the voices of conscience, to the sea—and the sea was drying up. But on land there was war. And war had greatly improved. It had not yet become mechanistic, but industrially it had been revolutionized. A Yankee cabin boy called Colt, who had whittled his wooden model of a revolving pistol on board an East India merchantman, had made a good thing out of war. There were yet chances for adventure and hardship left. Ward turned soldier.

To leave this cancerous land behind; to be great; great as Walker in Nicaragua might have been great; to be greater than Commodore Perry! to fight in the Crimea, in Mexico, in the Argentine! But then, one might be rich instead. An American had to be rich. One could get rich if one lived in New York. But South American memories of Garibaldi and Salem memories of Crowninshield's plan to rape Napoleon from St. Helena made New York business dull. The Orient had a certain smell. Ward locked his office, mounted his horse and rode to San Francisco Bay, where ten years before, during the gold rush, he had seen five hundred stranded ships lie on the beach, to be turned into brothels and prisons for their mutinous crews.

In China there was raging the most miserable and destructive war, save one, in all recorded history. To China Ward sailed with all speed to lay his sea-learned knowledge of command and discipline, his bloody skill acquired in warfare on three continents, at the disposal of the conquering rebels. These worshipers of the same God soon to be invoked in "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," these revivers of the empire of the Mings and the church of Prester John, stirred his mind as they stirred all men's excepting only the missionaries'. The Chinese Christian rebels offered as good a cause, as fit an instrument, as ever presented itself to a soldier driven by superb lust for fame. By some obscure inward flaw in his destiny Ward never joined them, but joined instead the Manchu cause. In two years, interrupted by a term of British imprisonment, he conquered thirty rebel cities at contract prices, as others bargained in ships' cargoes, and he broke the rebels' strength. Ward was made a Mandarin and given a peacock's feather. China was delivered to the mercies of Western progress.

What was it in the back of his head which explained this crucial choice? Was his motive merely that of greed for immediate gain? Rather, it was a simple sign of the limits God set upon his nature. The fame of a high order which is already his may yet rise in estimation with the future military history of China. His rank as a Confucian Saint is as glorious as any his own state could have won him for services in war, as his epitaph is more lyrical: "A youthful hero from beyond the sea has sprinkled China with his azure blood."

A mutinous crew had once had a look at Ward with a powder keg in one hand and a firebrand in the other, ready to blow his ship to Hell. One look was enough. This was surely as splendid a sight as the sound of Gordon saying under a similar situation, "Damned nontheth. Tholdierth muthin't mutiny." That had a splendid sound. Yet Gordon as a martyr for Western imperialism seems to have met Destiny. Destiny seems to have evaded Ward, for all the speed of his career to meet it.

Like Joan of Arc before him, he never carried arms, but (like Gordon after him) only a walking stick. His troops thought him invulnerable but, as bullets spurted in the dust about him, one of them lodged in his spine. He put his hand to his belly and said in dismay, "Have been hit." His body was buried (1862) in a temple yard and a shrine rose over his grave. As a youth, serving as second mate of the "Hamilton," while, under full sail, she plowed the tropic seas, Ward had once plunged overboard, pursuing a butterfly.

JOHN WHEELWRIGHT.

An Artist with a Bad Conscience

A Man and His Dog, by Thomas Mann, translated by Herman George Scheffauer. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

TOWARDS the end of one of his most illuminating, if not his most admirable, long short stories, Thomas Mann uses the groping mind of a young artist as a vehicle for certain reflections which have about them an intensely personal ring. "For it is certainly my bourgeois conscience," writes Tonio Kröger, "which permits me to see something profoundly unsteady, ambiguous, profoundly obnoxious, profoundly questionable, in everything artistic, everything unusual, everything with genius . . . if anything is capable of making a poet out of a literary man, then it is this bourgeois love of mine for the human, the vivacious, the ordinary. All warmth, all kindness, all humor derives from this; and it almost seems as though it were the very love of which it is written: one can talk with the tongues of men and angels, yet words without this love would be resounding brass, a ringing shell."

This, it seems to me, is a clear and intelligent restatement of the humanistic doctrines, the ancient and genuine article, unvitiated and undistorted by the monkeyshines of our contemporary scholiasts. Mann, who is several million light-years removed from the Neo-Humanists, invades intellectual and philosophical territory, not because he derives pleasure from it, but simply because he conceives it to be his duty to go forth to war against entrenched systems of philosophy and thought; once satisfied that he has put dents in the armor of the Philistines, he retires, with a sigh of relief, back to a compassionate contemplation of the plight of human kind. His distrust of the artist is no deeper than his distrust of the simon-pure intellectual or aristocrat. Settembrini, the humanist of "The Magic Mountain," Aschenbach, the artist of "Death in Venice," Hanno Buddenbrooks, the aristocrat—they are condemned equally to sterility and resourcelessness, to decay and death. And the man ruled by emotion does not fare much better; at the opposite pole from Settembrini, apostle of reason, Mann has set Mynheer Peeperkorn, as curious and powerful a creature as can be found in modern literature—Peeperkorn is the man of feeling raised to the *nth* degree: he is inarticulate, he can neither talk nor think, he considers it the ultimate blasphemy to be found deficient in feeling, and he ends up by sticking into himself a hypodermic syringe filled with a horrid, deadly poison. The inference can be had for the picking. Those who pursue the "great, dæmonic beauty" in whatever guise are doomed: nobody but the human, the vivacious, the ordinary have a chance to inherit the earth, and it's a pretty measly chance at that.

Only recently has it been made possible for us on this side of the water to form any sort of estimate of the relation of Mann to his work; we have to thank for it, oddly enough, the appearance in translation of his casual writings. His two momentous novels, in which he thumbs his nose at his conscience and goes full steam ahead into seas on which no self-respecting bourgeois, even of the strayed variety, has business to be, are objective careful works constructed on the grand scale by a man who is far too good a craftsman to intrude himself in their splendid, architectonic patterns. The intimations which they give of his own philosophy and natural environment are fortuitous and far between, not to be had without digging; a person acquainted only with "Buddenbrooks" and "The Magic Mountain" would think that Mann labored only long and monumentally, and never had produced a mouse. But now, the Nobel award having saddled him with a transatlantic reputation, he is gradually being forced, through the medium of short and inconspicuous bits of prose doled out in teaspoonfuls by his publishers, down the reluctant throats of the American public. It is a procedure which as a rule works to the detriment of an author: it is one of the several penalties attached to fame, but Mann, I think, can stand it. No matter how unpretentious are the things he chooses to write about, he cannot escape from being an artist and he seems to be incapable of producing negligible or shoddy stuff.

Moreover, these small volumes reveal a good deal. In them Mann surrenders to the voice of his conscience and writes simply, of simple and homely and personal things. In "Unordnung and Frühes Leid," published here last spring under the somewhat lopsided title of "Early Sorrow," he attempts to show how serious has been the effect of the disorder in which the upper middle class of Germany was left by the War upon the emotional lives of those too young, too immature, to develop immunity. With a skill and restraint which suggest Chekhov, he describes the bewilderment of a father troubled by the reflex behavior of his children; there is in the story a personal note which gives it added interest and value. And again, in this present translation, which is not a story at all, but a leisurely and charming appreciation of a dog, Mann has relaxed a little from the pursuit of the dæmonic beauty and let his conscience be his only guide.

"A Man and His Dog" appeared in Germany in 1918, under the title of "Herr und Hund." Bashan is a short-haired setter with no parentage to speak about; we meet him first as a skinny, unpromising pup who expands in health and stature and blind attachment to his owner; Mann grows fond of him and takes him out into the fields to chase after field mice and to a clinic when he becomes ill. That is about all. It is a pleasant, unexciting little essay, full of ingratiating bits of prose, illumined from

within by a quiet tender humor; it is important, chiefly, for the glimpses it gives of Mann himself. "It is quaint and cozy and amusing to feel him sitting on my foot and penetrating it with the feverish glow of his body. A sense of gaiety and sympathy fills my bosom as always when I am abandoned to him, to his idea of things. . . ." Bashan's master emerges as a person of simple habits and tastes, a burgher of suburban Munich who has an unaffected love of the countryside and likes to take walks in it alone, a man who is not at all afraid of the commonplace, who is determined never to lose the capacity for taking pleasure in ordinary, human things.

So much for the book. But for a full and proper understanding of Mann, it seems to me it is quite as necessary to read it as to read the novels which are the durable foundations of his fame and reputation. If he is the bourgeois strayed into literature, then "A Man and His Dog" represents the bourgeois in him, and "The Magic Mountain," the straying.

HOWARD COXE.

Why Are We Unhappy?

The Conquest of Happiness, by Bertrand Russell. New York: Horace Liveright. 249 pages. $3.

IT HAS become a commonplace that, in spite of our "progress" and all the triumphs of science, we have not yet succeeded in producing a society in which most men have a reasonable prospect of becoming happy. The reasons for unhappiness are partly in the social system (including the prevailing systems of education), and partly in individual psychology, and these, of course, interact. Mr. Russell has already written very eloquently about the social and educational changes which are necessary. In the present volume, he writes about the causes of unhappiness from the standpoint of the individual. "I venture to hope," he writes in the preface, "that some among those multitudes of men and women who suffer unhappiness without enjoying it may find their situation diagnosed and a method of escape suggested."

It soon becomes evident that Mr. Russell sees the key to happiness very largely in the avoidance of introspection and in the cultivation of an outgoing attitude of mind. In a brief autobiographical passage, he writes:

> Like others who had a Puritan education, I had a habit of meditating on my sins, faults and shortcomings. I seemed to myself—no doubt justly—a miserable specimen. Gradually, I learned to be indifferent to myself and my deficiencies; I came to center my attention increasingly upon external objects: the state of the world, various branches of knowledge, individuals for whom I felt affection. . . . Every external interest inspires some activity which, so long as the interest remains alive, is a complete preventive of ennui.

The book is divided into two parts, the first part being on the causes of unhappiness and the second part on the causes of happiness. The first cause of unhappiness of which Mr. Russell treats is that which he calls "Byronic unhappiness." This sort is, of course, confined chiefly to intellectuals, and its intellectual statement is set forth in Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch's "The Modern Temper." I think Mr. Russell is right in saying that this form of unhappiness is commonest among those whose education has been too exclusively literary, and who are, therefore, very much out of touch with the main sources of zest in the modern world. His advice to them is probably sound:

> Give up trying to write and, instead, try not to write. Go out into the world; become a pirate, a King in Borneo, a laborer in Soviet Russia, give yourself an existence in which the satisfaction of elementary physical needs will occupy almost all your energies. . . . I believe that, after some years of such an existence, the intellectual will find that, in spite of his efforts, he can no longer refrain from writing, and when this time comes, his writing will not seem to him futile.

Nevertheless, unhappiness is by no means confined to disillusioned intellectuals. The chief causes of unhappiness mentioned by Mr. Russell are the strain produced by life in a highly competitive civilization; the constant search for excitement; the chronic fatigue from which people tend to suffer when they are subject to much instinctive thwarting; envy, which is probably abnormally common in a period like our own, when men have ceased to believe in the justice of the inequalities by which they are surrounded; the sense of sin which afflicts many of those whose conscious beliefs are out of harmony with the survival in their unconscious of traditional beliefs; persecution mania and, lastly, the fear of public opinion. The causes of happiness are principally zest, affection given and received, the family (but not so commonly as it ought to be), work, and the cultivation of impersonal interests. On all these topics Mr. Russell has a great deal to say which is in line with the views of modern psychiatry. Unfortunately, the habit of talking in jargon on these matters has become so common that writers who do not use the jargon find it difficult to gain respect for their views. "The Conquest of Happiness" is really an ABC of mental hygiene written with all Mr. Russell's charm and wit and lucidity, and so simply that almost anyone who is able to read can follow his arguments.

A book of Mr. Russell's inevitably tempts one to excessive quotation because of his extraordinary gift for felicitous phrase:

> Too much excitement not only undermines the health, but dulls the palate for every kind of pleasure, substituting titillations for profound organic satisfactions, cleverness for wisdom and jagged surprises for beauty.
>
> A generation that cannot endure boredom will be a generation of little men, of men unduly divorced from the slow processes of nature, of men in whom every vital impulse slowly withers, as though they were cut flowers in a vase.
>
> Among those who are rich enough to choose their way of life, the particular brand of unendurable boredom from which they suffer is due, paradoxical as this may seem, to their fear of boredom
>
> Why is propaganda so much more successful when it stirs up hatred than when it tries to stir up friendly feeling? The reason is, clearly, that the human heart, as modern civilization has made it, is more prone to hatred than to friendship, and it is prone to hatred because it is dissatisfied, because it feels deeply, perhaps even unconsciously, that it has somehow missed the meaning of life, that perhaps others, but not we ourselves, have secured the good things which nature offers for man's enjoyment.

I think this is a better book for the general public than would probably have been written by a professional psychiatrist. For example, fear of maladjustment on the part of children has become almost a mania among parents who

are interested in modern psychiatry. Both the parents and the psychiatrists tend to forget that adjustment to one's environment is by no means always a sign of merit. Mr. Russell's constant awareness of the importance of civilized values means that such points never escape his notice, and that the whole book is informed by a very fine sense of balance. He tells us quite definitely that the book is not addressed to highbrows; but as an attempt to state in simple language the main causes of unhappiness in the modern world, it is to be commended to all who take a serious interest in this very important problem.

W. B. CURRY.

Literary Madness

Confessions: A Study in Pathology, by Arthur Symons. New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. 88 pages. $2.

THE CURIOUS thing about madness is its limitation as a literary subject. It has served dramatic purposes when an Ivan Karamazov loses his reason or when a King Lear goes out of his head. By itself, madness seems to have few possibilities. Perhaps this is true because of the easy classifications insane men fall into. They suffer from mania of persecution or delusions of grandeur; they are quiet or raving; they slaughter others or are Popes of Rome. Possibly, also, one has to know in some detail the past history of the mad individual for his aberration to be interesting beyond the first shock. For, once the actual horror, which arises, no doubt, as a sympathetic reaction, is past, the subject loses attraction. The distance a madman's thoughts go beyond the superficial order of normal reality is so small that one needs the events of normality to give the projections, or intrusions, of madness any significance. Insanity does not even appear to have the literary uses the dream is believed to have by the adherents of the late Transition.

Arthur Symons' account of a mad period in his life suffers from the general handicap. One has to assume, of course, in order to write a book like Symons', either that the aberration is sufficiently individual in itself or that the experience is harrowing enough to be recorded, or that the world will be interested because the madman is such and such a man. In Symons' case it must have been the last. His "Confessions" is the account of a literary man suddenly reduced, beyond all accounting, to a mere lunatic.

As a record in pathology, the confessions are singularly lacking in an account of the actual pathological events or their results. The method, indeed, that Symons has used is a strange one; at times it seems as if the literary company his madness brought him into is more valuable than sanity. This study in pathology is little more than a compilation of comments, sometimes interesting, sometimes not, on madness in general, and a good deal of irrelevant quotation from Shelley, Sir Thomas Browne, Pater and Rosetti. Gérard de Nerval comes in for a great amount of attention, and certainly with more justice than the other writers. But even granting Symons' consuming interest in literature, what was surely an authentic experience is diluted by being strained through the thoughts, sane or not, of other writers.

The fact that Symons writes so extremely well and vividly, when he chooses, makes the nature of the book as a whole the more disappointing. It appears unfortunate that Symons should interrupt his text with quotations from his own writings on Blake and Meredith, when he can tell excellently, for example, of the attack two spike-booted jailers made upon his naked feet. His attention to parallels in literature makes even his preoccupation with death never immediate, but always remote, literary. Here, clearly, is the case of a man for whom literature has not deepened experience but thinned it. It is the case of a man whose being, either uprooted in madness or in the after-contemplation of that upheaval, reveals principally an acquaintance with the masters, great and less, of prose and poetic style.

KENNETH WHITE.

Contributors

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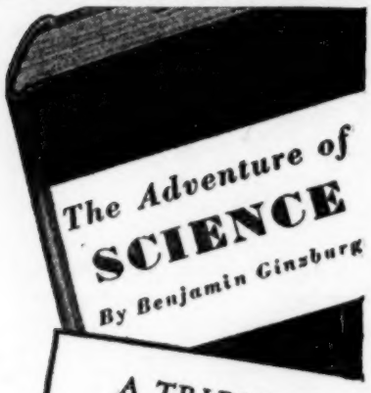

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